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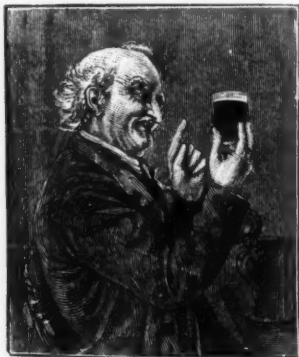
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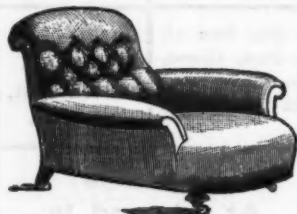
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MARCH 1888.

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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

MARCH 1888.

Eve.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'JOHN HERRING,' 'MEHALAH,' &C.

CHAPTER XXVII.

POOR MARTIN.

EVE was uneasy all next day—at intervals—she could do nothing continuously—because of her promise. The recollection that she had bound herself to meet Watt on the Raven Rock at sundown came on her repeatedly during the day, spoiling her happiness. She would not have scrupled to fail to keep her promise, but that the horrible boy would be sure to force himself upon her, and in revenge do some dreadful mischief. She was so much afraid of him, that she felt that to keep her appointment was the lesser evil.

As the sun declined her heart failed her, and just before the orb set in bronze and gold she asked Jane, the housemaid, to accompany her through the fields to the Raven Rock.

Timid Eve dare not trust herself alone on the dangerous platform with that imp. He was capable of any devilry. He might scare her out of her wits.

Jane was a good-natured girl, and she readily obliged her young mistress. Jane Welsh's mother, who was a widow, lived not far from Morwell, in a cottage on the banks of the Tamar, higher up, where a slip of level meadow ran out from the cliffs, and the river made a loop round it.

As Eve walked through the fields towards the wood, and

neared the trees and rocks, she began to think that she had made a mistake. It would not do for Jane to see Watt. She would talk about him, and Barbara would hear, and question her. If Barbara asked her why she had gone out at dusk to meet the boy, what answer could she make?

When Eve came to the gate into the wood she stood still, and holding the gate half open, told Jane she might stay there, for she would go on by herself.

Jane was surprised.

'Please, miss, I've nothing to take me back to the house.' Eve hastily protested that she did not want her to return: she was to remain at the gate. 'And if I call, come on to me, Jane, not otherwise. I have a headache, and I want to be alone.'

'Very well, miss.'

But Jane was puzzled, and said to herself, 'There's a lover, sure as eggs in April.'

Then Eve closed the gate between herself and Jane, and went on. Before disappearing into the shade of the trees, she looked back, and saw the maid where she had left her, platting grass.

A lover! A lover is the philosopher's stone that turns the sordid alloy of life into gold. The idea of a lover was the most natural solution of the caprice in Miss Eve's conduct. As every road leads to Rome, so in the servant-maid mind does every line of life lead to a sweetheart.

Jane, having settled that her young mistress had gone on to meet a lover, next questioned who that lover could be, and here she was utterly puzzled. Sure enough Miss Eve had been to a dance at the Cloberrys', but whom she had met there, and to whom lost her heart, that Jane did not know, and that also Jane was resolved to ascertain.

She noiselessly unhasped the gate, and stole along the path. The burnished brazen sky of evening shone between the tree trunks, but the foliage had lost its verdure in the gathering dusk. The honeysuckles poured forth their scent in waves. The air near the hedge and deep into the wood was honeyed with it. White and yellow speckled currant moths were flitting about the hedge. Jane stole along, stealthily, from tree to tree, fearful lest Eve should turn and catch her spying. A large Scotch pine cast a shadow under it like ink. On reaching that, Jane knew she could see the top of the Raven Rock.

As she thus advanced on tiptoe she heard a rustling, as of a bird in the tree overhead. Her heart stood still. Then, before

she had time to recover herself, with a shrill laugh, a little black figure came tumbling down before her out of the tree, capered, leaped at her, threw his arms round her neck, and screamed into her face, 'Carry me! Carry me! Carry me!'

Then his arms relaxed, he dropped off, shrieking with laughter, and Jane fled, as fast as her limbs could bear her, back to the gate, through the gate, and away over the meadows to Morwell House.

Eve had gone on to the platform of rock; she stood there irresolute, hoping that the detested boy would not appear, when she heard his laugh and shout, and the scream of Jane. She would have fainted with terror, had not at that moment a tall man stepped up to her and laid his hand on her arm. 'Do not be afraid, sweet fairy Eve! It is I—your poor slave Martin—perfectly bewitched, drawn back by those loadstone eyes. Do not be frightened, Watt is merely giving a scare to the inquisitive servant.'

Eve was trembling violently. This was worse than meeting the ape of a boy. She had committed a gross indiscretion. What would Barbara say?—her father, if he heard of it, how vexed he would be!

'I must go back,' she said, with a feeble effort at dignity. 'This is too bad; I have been deceived.' Then she gave way to weakness, and burst into tears.

'No,' he said carelessly, 'you shall not go. I will not suffer you to escape now that I have a chance of seeing you and speaking with you. To begin at the beginning—I love you. There! you are all of a tremble. Sit down and listen to what I have to say. You will not? Well, consider. I run terrible risks by being here; I may say that I place my life in your delicate hands.'

She looked up at him, still too frightened to speak, even to comprehend his words.

'I do not know you!' she whispered, when she was able to gather together the poor remnants of her strength.

'You remember me. I have your ring, and you have mine. We are, in a manner, bound to each other. Be patient, dear love; listen to me. I will tell you all my story.'

He saw that she was in no condition to be pressed. If he spoke of love she would make a desperate effort to escape. Weak and giddy though she was, she would not endure that from a man of whom she knew nothing. He saw that. He knew he must give her time to recover from her alarm, so he said, 'I wish, most

beautiful fairy, you would rest a few minutes on this piece of rock. I am a poor, hunted, suffering, misinterpreted wretch, and I come to tell you my story, only to entreat your sympathy and your prayers. I will not say a rude word, I will not lay a finger on you. All I ask is: listen to me. That cannot hurt you. I am a beggar, a beggar whining at your feet, not asking for more alms than a tear of pity. Give me that, that only, and I go away relieved.'

She seemed somewhat reassured, and drew a long breath.

'I had a sister of your name.'

She raised her head and looked at him with surprise.

'It is an uncommon name. My poor sister is gone. I suppose it is your name that has attracted me to you, that induces me to open my heart to you. I mean to confide to you my troubles. You say that you do not know me. I will tell you all my story, and then, sweet Eve, you will indeed know me, and, knowing me, will shower tears of precious pity, that will infinitely console me.'

She was still trembling, but flattered, and relieved that he asked for nothing save sympathy. That of course she was at liberty to bestow on a deserving object. She was wholly inexperienced, easily deceived by flattery.

'Have I frightened you?' asked Martin. 'Am I so dreadful, so unsightly an object as to inspire you with aversion and terror?' He drew himself up and paused. Eve hastily looked at him. He was a strikingly handsome man, with dark hair, wonderful dark eyes, and finely chiselled features.

'I said that I put my life in your hands. I spoke the truth. You have but to betray me, and the police and the parish constables will come in a *posse* after me. I will stand here with folded arms to receive them; but mark my words, as soon as they set foot on this rock I will fling myself over the edge and perish. If *you* sacrifice me, my life is not worth saving.'

'I will not betray you,' faltered Eve.

'I know it. You are too noble, too true, too heroic to be a traitress. I knew it when I came here and placed myself at your mercy.'

'But,' said Eve, timidly, 'what have you done? You have taken my ring. Give it back to me, and I will not send the constables after you.'

'You have mine.'

'I will return it.'

'About that hereafter,' said Martin, grandly, and he waved his

hand. 'Now I answer your question, What have I done? I will tell you everything. It is a long story and a sad one. Certain persons come out badly in it whom I would spare. But it may not be otherwise. Self-defence is the first law of nature. You have, no doubt, heard a good deal about me, and not to my advantage. I have been prejudiced in your eyes by Jasper. He is narrow, does not make allowances, has never recovered the straitlacing father gave him as a child. His conscience has not expanded since infancy.'

Eve looked at Martin with astonishment.

'Mr. Jasper Babb has not said anything——'

'Oh, there!' interrupted Martin, 'you may spare your sweet lips the fib. I know better than that. He grumbles and mumbles about me to every one who will open an ear to his tales. If he were not my brother——'

Now Eve interrupted him. 'Mr. Jasper your brother!'

'Of course he is. Did he not tell you so?' He saw that she had not known by the expression of her face, so, with a laugh, he said, 'Oh dear, no! Of course, Jasper was too grand and sanctimonious a man to confess to the blot in the family. I am that blot—look at me!'

He showed his handsome figure and face by a theatrical gesture and position. 'Poor Martin is the blot to which Jasper will not confess, and yet—Martin survives this neglect and disrespect.'

The overweening vanity, the mock humility, the assurance of the man passed unnoticed by Eve. She breathed freely when she heard that he was the brother of Jasper. There could have been no harm in an interview with Jasper, and consequently very little in one with his brother. So she argued, and so she reconciled herself to the situation. Now she traced a resemblance between the brothers which had escaped her before; they had the same large dark expressive eyes, but Jasper's face was not so regular, his features not so purely chiselled as those of Martin. He was broader built; Martin had the perfect modelling of a Greek statue. There was also a more manly, self-confident bearing in Martin than in the elder brother, who always appeared bowed as with some burden that oppressed his spirits, and took from him self-assertion and buoyancy, that even maimed his vigour of manhood.

'I dare say you have had a garbled version of my story,' continued Martin, seating himself; and Eve, without considering,

seated herself also. Martin let himself down gracefully, and assumed a position where the evening light, still lingering in the sky, could irradiate his handsome face. 'That is why I have sought this interview. I desired to put myself right with you. No doubt you have heard that I got into trouble.'

She shook her head.

'Well, I did. I was unlucky. In fact, I could stay with my father no longer. I had already left him for a twelvemonth, but I came back, and, in Scriptural terms, such as he could understand, asked him to give me the portion of goods that fell to me. He refused, so I took it.'

'Took—took what?'

'My portion of goods, not in stock but in money. For my part,' said Martin, folding his arms, 'it has ever struck me that the Prodigal Son was far the nobler of the brothers. The eldest was a mean fellow. The second had his faults—I admit it—but he was a man of independence of action; he would not stand being bullyragged by his father, so he went away. I got into difficulties over that matter. My father would not overlook it, made a fuss, and so on. My doctrine is—let bygones be bygones, and accept what comes and don't kick. That my father could not see, and so I got locked up.'

'Locked up—where?'

'In a pill-box. I managed, however, to escape; I am at large, and at your feet—entreating to you to pity me.'

He suited the action to the word. In a moment he was gracefully kneeling before her on one knee, with his hand on his heart.

'Oh, Miss Eve,' he said, 'since I saw your face in the moonlight I have never forgotten it. Wherever I went it haunted me. I saw these great beautiful eyes looking timidly into mine; by day they eclipsed the sun. Whatever I did I thought only of you. And now, what is it that I ask of you? Nothing but forgiveness. The money—the portion of goods that fell to me—was yours. My father owed it to you. It was intended for you. But now, hear me, you noble, generous-spirited girl; I have borrowed the money: it shall be returned, or its equivalent. If you desire it, I will swear.' He stood up and assumed an attitude.

'Oh, no!' said Eve; 'you had my money?'

'As surely as I had your ring.'

'Much in the same way,' she said, with a little sharpness.

'But I shall return one with the other. Trust me. Stand up; look me in the face. Do I bear the appearance of a cheat, a thief,

a robber? Am I base, villainous? No, I am nothing but a poor, foolish, prodigal lad, who has got into a scrape, but will get out of it again. You forgive me. Hark! I hear some one calling.'

'It is Barbara. She is looking for me.'

'Then I disappear.' He put his hand to his lips, wafted her a kiss, whispered, 'When you look at the ring, remember poor, poor Martin,' and he slipped away among the bushes.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FATHER AND SON.

BARBARA was mistaken. Jasper had gone to Buckfastleigh, gone openly to his father's house, in the belief that his father was dying. He knocked at the blotched and scaled door under the dilapidated portico, but received no answer. He tried the door. It was locked and barred. Then he went round to the back, noting how untidy the garden was, how out of repair was the house; and in the yard of the kitchen he found the deaf housekeeper. His first question, shouted into her ear, naturally was an inquiry after his father. He learned to his surprise that the old man was not ill, but was then in the factory. Thinking that his question had been misunderstood, he entered the house, went into his father's study, then up to his bedroom, and through the dirty window-panes saw the old man leaving the mill on his way back to the house.

What, then, had Watt meant by sending him to the old home on false tidings? The boy was indeed mischievous, but this was more than common mischief. He must have sent him on a fool's errand for some purpose of his own. That the boy wanted to hear news of his father was possible, but not probable. The only other alternative Jasper could suggest to explain Watt's conduct was the disquieting one that he wanted to be rid of Jasper from Morwell for some purpose of his own. What could that purpose be?

Jasper's blood coursed hot through his veins. He was angry. He was a forbearing man, ready always to find an excuse for a transgressor, but this was a transgression too malicious to be easily forgiven. Jasper determined, now that he was at home, to see his father, and then to return to the Jordans as quickly as he could. He had ridden his own horse, that horse must have a night's rest, but to-morrow he would return.

He was thus musing when Mr. Babb came in.

'You here!' said the old man. 'What has brought you to Buckfastleigh again? Want money, of course.' Then snappishly, 'You shan't get it.'

'I am come,' said his son, 'because I had received information that you were ill. Have you been unwell, father?'

'I—no! I'm never ill. No such luck for you. If I were ill and helpless, you might take the management, you think. If I were dead, that would be nuts to you.'

'My father, you wrong me. I left you because I would no longer live this wretched life, and because I hate your unforgiving temper.'

'Unforgiving!' sneered the old manufacturer. 'Martin was a thief, and he deserved his fate. Is not Brutus applauded because he condemned his own son? Is not David held to be weak because he bade Joab spare Absalom?'

'We will not squeeze old crushed apples. No juice will run from them,' replied Jasper. 'The thing was done, and might have been forgiven. I would not have returned now had I not been told that you were dying.'

'Who told you that lie?'

'Walter.'

'He! He was ever a liar, a mocker, a blasphemer! How was he to know? I thank Heaven he has not shown his jackanapes visage here since he left. I dying! I never was sounder. I am better in health and spirits since I am quit of my sons. They vexed my righteous soul every day with their ungodly deeds. So you supposed I was dying, and came here to see what meat could be picked off your father's bones?'

Jasper remembered Watt's sneer. It was clear whence the boy had gathered his mean views of men's motives.

'I'll trouble you to return whence you came,' said Ezekiel Babb. 'No blessing has rested on me since I brought the strange blood into the house. Now that all of you are gone—you, Eve number one, and Eve number two, Martin and Walter—I am well. The Son of Peace has returned to this house; I can read my Bible and do my accounts in quiet, without fears of what new bit of mischief or devilry my children have been up to, without any more squeaking of fiddles and singing of profane songs all over the house. Come now!'—the old man raised his bushy brows and flashed a cunning, menacing glance at his son—'come now! if you had found me dead—in Abraham's bosom—what would you

have done? I know what Walter would have done: he would have capered up and down all over the house, fiddling like a devil, like a devil as he is.' He looked at Jasper again, inquisitively. 'Well, what would you have done?—fiddled too?'

'My father, as you desire to know, I will tell you. I would at once have realised what I could, and have cleared off the debt to Mr. Jordan.'

'Well, you may do that when the day comes,' said the old manufacturer, shrugging his shoulders. 'It is nothing to me what you do with the mill and the house and the land after I am'—he turned up his eyes to the dirty ceiling—'where the wicked cease from fiddling and no thieves break in and steal. I am not going to pay the money twice over. My obligation ended when the money went out of this house. I did more than I was required. I chastised my own son for taking it. What was seven years on Dartmoor? A flea-bite. Under the old law the rebellious son was stoned till he died. I suppose, now, you are hungry. Call the old crab; kick her, pinch her, till she understands, and let her give you something to eat. There are some scraps, I know, of veal-pie and cold potatoes. I think, by the way, the veal-pie is done. Don't forget to ask a blessing before you fall-to on the cold potatoes.' Then he rubbed his forehead and said, 'Stay, I'll go and rouse the old toad myself; you stay here. You are the best of my children. All the rest were a bad lot—too much of the strange blood in them.'

Whilst Mr. Babb is rousing his old housekeeper to produce some food, we will say a few words of the past history of the Babb family.

Eve the first, Mr. Babb's wife, had led a miserable life. She did not run away from him: she remained and poured forth the fiery love of her heart upon her children, especially on her eldest, a daughter, Eve, to whom she talked of her old life—its freedom, its happiness, its attractions. She died of a broken spirit on the birth of her third son, Walter. Then Eve, the eldest, a beautiful girl, unable to endure the bad temper of her father, the depressing atmosphere of the house, and the cares of housekeeping imposed on her, ran away after a travelling band of actors.

Jasper, the eldest son, grew up to be grave and resigned. He was of use in the house, managing it as far as he was allowed, and helping his father in many ways. But the old man, who had grumbled at and insulted his wife whilst she was alive, could not keep his tongue from the subject that still rankled in his heart.

This occasioned quarrels; the boy took his mother's side, and refused to hear his father's gibes at her memory. He was passionately attached to his next brother Martin. The mother had brought a warm, loving spirit into the family, and Jasper had inherited much of it. He stood as a screen between his brother and father, warding off from the former many a blow and angry reprimand. He did Martin's school tasks for him; he excused his faults; he admired him for his beauty, his spirit, his bearing, his lively talk. There was no lad, in his opinion, who could equal Martin; Watt was right when he said that Jasper had contributed to his ruin by humouring him, but Jasper humoured him because he loved him, and pitied him for the uncongeniality of his home. Martin displayed a talent for music, and there was an old musician at Ashburton, the organist of the parish church, who developed and cultivated his talent, and taught him both to play and sing. Jasper had also an instinctive love of music, and he also learned the violin and surpassed his brother, who had not the patience to master the first difficulties, and who preferred to sing.

The father, perhaps, saw in Martin a recrudescence of the old proclivities of his mother; he tried hard to interfere with his visits to the musician, and only made Martin more set on his studies with him. But the most implacable, incessant state of war was that which raged between the old father and his youngest son, Walter, or Watt as his brothers called him. This boy had no reverence in him. He scouted the authority of his father and of Jasper. He scoffed at everything the old man held sacred. He absolutely refused to go to the Baptist Chapel frequented by his father, he stopped his ears and made grimaces at his brothers and the servants during family worship, and the devotions were not unfrequently concluded with a rush of the old man at his youngest son and the administration of resounding clouts on the ears.

At last a quarrel broke out between them of so fierce a nature that Watt was expelled the house. Then Martin left to follow Watt, who had joined a travelling dramatic company. After a year, however, Martin returned, very thin and woe-begone, and tried to accommodate himself to home life once more. But it was not possible; he had tasted of the sort of life that suited him—one rambling, desultory, artistic. He robbed his father's bureau, and ran away.

Then it was that he was taken, and in the same week sent to the assizes, and condemned to seven years' penal labour in the convict establishment at Prince's Town. Thence he had escaped,

assisted by Jasper and Watt, whilst the former was on his way to Morwell with the remnant of the money recovered from Martin.

The rest is known to the reader.

Whilst Jasper ate the mean meal provided for him, his father watched him.

'So,' said the old man, and the twinkle was in his cunning eyes, 'so you have hired yourself to Mr. Ignatius Jordan at Morwell as his steward?'

'Yes, father. I remain there as pledge to him that he shall be repaid, and I am doing there all I can to put the estate into good order. It has been shockingly neglected.'

'Who for?' asked Mr. Babb.

'I do not understand.'

'For whom are you thus working?'

'For Mr. Jordan, as you said!'

The manufacturer chuckled.

'Jasper,' said he, 'some men look on a pool and see nothing but water. I put my head in, open my eyes, and see what is at the bottom. That girl did not come here for nothing. I put my head under water and open my eyes.'

'Well?' said Jasper, with an effort controlling his irritation.

'Well! I saw it all under the surface. I saw you. She came here because she was curious to see the factory and the house, and to know if all was as good as you had bragged about. I gave her a curt dismissal; I do not want a daughter-in-law thrusting her feet into my shoes till I cast them off for ever.'

Jasper started to his feet and upset his chair. He was very angry. 'You utterly wrong her,' he said. 'You open your eyes in mud, and see only dirt. Miss Jordan came here out of kindness towards me, whom she dislikes and despises in her heart.'

Mr. Babb chuckled.

'Well, I won't say that you have not acted wisely. Morwell will go to that girl, and it is a pretty property.'

'I beg your pardon, you are wrong. It is left to the second—Eve.'

'So, so! It goes to Eve! That is why the elder girl came here, to see if she could fit herself into Owlacombe.'

Jasper's face burnt, and the muscles of his head and neck quivered, but he said nothing. He dared not trust himself to speak. He had all his life practised self-control, but he never needed it more than at this moment.

'I see it all,' pursued the old man, his crafty face contracting

with a grin; 'Mr. Jordan thought to provide for both his daughters. Buckfastleigh mill and Owlacombe for the elder, Morwell for the younger—ha, ha! The elder to take you so as to get this pretty place. And she came to look at it and see if it suited her. Well! It is a pretty place—only,' he giggled, 'it ain't vacant and to be had just yet.'

Jasper took his hat; his face was red as blood, and his dark eyes flashed.

'Don't go,' said the old manufacturer; 'you did not see their little trap, and walked into it, eh? One word of warning I must give you. Don't run after the younger; Eve is your niece.'

'Father!'

'Ah! that surprises you, does it? It is true. Eve's mother was your sister. Did Mr. Jordan never tell you that?'

'Never!'

'It is true. Sit down again to the cold potatoes. You shall know all, but first ask a blessing.'

CHAPTER XXIX.

HUSH-MONEY.

'YES,' said Mr. Babb, settling himself on a chair; then finding he had sat on the tails of his coat, he rose, held a tail in each hand, and reseated himself between them; 'yes.'

'Do you mean seriously to tell me that Mr. Jordan's second wife was my sister?'

'Well—in a way. That is, I don't mean your sister in a way, but his wife in a way.'

'I have heard nothing of this; what do you mean?'

'I mean that he did not marry her.'

Jasper Babb's face darkened. 'I have been in his house and spoken to him, and not known that! What became of my sister?'

The old man fidgeted on his chair. It was not comfortable. 'I'm sure I don't know,' he said.

'Did she die?'

'No,' said Mr. Babb, 'she ran off with a play-actor.'

'Well—and after that?'

'After what? After the play-actor? I do not know, I have not heard of her since. I don't want to. Was not that enough?'

'And Mr. Jordan—does he know nothing?'

'I cannot tell. If you are curious to know, you can ask.'

'That is very extraordinary. Why did not Mr. Jordan tell me the relationship? He knew who I was.'

The old man laughed, and Jasper shuddered at his laugh, there was something so base and brutal in it.

'He was not so proud of how he behaved to Eve as to care to boast of the connection. You might not have liked it, might have fizzed and gone pop.'

Jasper's brow was on fire, his eyebrows met, and a sombre sparkle was in his eye.

'You have made no effort to trace her?'

Mr. Babb shrugged his shoulders.

'Tell me,' said Jasper, leaning his elbow on the table, and putting his hand over his eyes to screen them from the light and allow him to watch his father's face—'Tell me everything, as you undertook,—tell me how my poor sister came to Morwell, and how she left it.'

'There is not much to tell,' answered the father; 'you know that she ran away from home after her mother's death; you were then nine or ten years old. She hated work, and lusted after the pomps and vanities of this wicked world. After a while I heard where she was, that she was ill, and had been taken into Morwell House to be nursed, and that there she remained after her recovery.'

'Strange,' mused Jasper; 'she fell ill and was taken to Morwell; and I—it was the same. Things repeat themselves; the world moves in a circle.'

'Everything repeats itself. As in Eve's case the sickness led up to marriage, or something like it, so will it be in your case. This is what Mr. Jordan and Eve did: they went into the little old chapel, and took each other's hands before the altar, and swore fidelity to each other; that was all. Mr. Jordan is a Catholic, and would not have the knot tied by a church parson, and Eve would not confess to her name—she had that sense of decency left in her. They satisfied their consciences, but it was no legal marriage. I believe he would have done what was right, but she was perverse, and refused to give her name, and say both who she was and whence she came.'

'Go on,' said Jasper.

'Well, then, about a year after this I heard where she was, and I went after her to Morwell; but I did not go openly—I had no wish to encounter Mr. Jordan. I tried to persuade Eve to return with me to Buckfastleigh. Who can lay to my charge that I am

not a forgiving father? Have I not given you cold potato, and would have furnished you with veal-pie if the old woman had not finished the scraps? I saw Eve, and I told her my mind pretty freely, both about her running away and about her connection with Jordan. I will say this for her—she professed to be sorry for what she had done, and desired my forgiveness. That, I said, I would give her on one condition only, that she forsook her husband and child, and came back to keep house for me. I could not bring her to a decision, so I appointed her a day, and said I would take her final answer on that. But I was hindered going; I forget just now what it was, but I couldn't go that day.'

'Well, father, what happened?'

'As I could not keep my appointment—I remember now how it was, I was laid up with a grip of lumbago at Tavistock—I sent one of the actors there, from whom I had heard about her, with a message. I had the lumbago in my back that badly that I was bent double. When I was able to go, on the morrow, it was too late; she was gone.'

'Gone! Whither?'

'Gone off with the play-actor,' answered Mr. Babb, grimly. 'It runs in the blood.'

'You are sure of this?'

'Mr. Jordan told me so.'

'Did you not pursue her?'

'To what end? I had done my duty. I had tried my utmost to recover my daughter, and when for the second time she played me false, I wiped off the dust of my feet as a testimony against her.'

'She left her child?'

'Yes, she deserted her child as well as her husband—that is to say, Mr. Ignatius Jordan. She deserted the house that had sheltered her, to run after a homeless, bespangled, bepainted play-actor. I know all about it. The life at Morwell was too dull for her, it was duller there than at Buckfastleigh. Here she could see something of the world; she could watch the factory hands coming to their work and leaving it; but there she was as much out of the world as if she were in Lundy Isle. She had a hankering after the glitter and paint of this empty world.'

'I cannot believe this. I cannot believe that she would desert the man who befriended her, and forsake her child.'

'You say that because you did not know her. You know Martin; would he not do it? You know Watt; has he any

scruples and strong domestic affections? She was like them; had in her veins the same boiling, giddy, wanton blood.'

Jasper knew but too well that Martin and Watt were unscrupulous, and followed pleasure regardless of the calls of duty. He had been too young when his sister left home to know anything of her character. It was possible that she had the same light and careless temperament as Martin.

'A horse that shies once will shy again,' said the old man. 'Eve ran away from home once, and she ran away from the second home. If she did not run away from home a third time it probably was that she had none to desert.'

'And Mr. Jordan knows nothing of her?'

'He lives too far from the stream of life to see the broken dead things that drift down it.'

Jasper considered. The flash of anger had faded from his brow; an expression of great sadness had succeeded. His hand was over his brow, but he was no longer intent on his father's face; his eyes rested on the table.

'I must find out something about my sister. It is too horrible to think of our sister, our only sister, as a lost, sunk, degraded thing.'

He thought of Mr. Jordan, of his strange manner, his abstracted look, his capricious temper. He did not believe that the master of Morwell was in his sound senses. He seemed to be a man whose mind had preyed on some great sorrow till all nerve had gone out of it. What was that sorrow? Once Barbara had said to him, in excuse for some violence and rudeness in her father's conduct, that he had never got over the loss of Eve's mother.

'Mr. Jordan was not easy about his treatment of my daughter,' said old Babb. 'From what little I saw of him seventeen years ago I take him to be a weak-spirited man. He was in a sad take-on then at the loss of Eve, and having a baby thrown on his hands unweaned. He offered me the money I wanted to buy those fields for stretching the cloth. You may be sure when a man presses money on you, and is indifferent to interest, that he wants you to forgive him something. He desired me to look over his conduct to my daughter, and drop all inquiries. I dare say they had had words, and then she was ready in her passion to run away with the first vagabond who offered.'

Then Jasper removed his hand from his face, and laid one on the other upon the table. His face was now pale, and the muscles

set. His eyes looked steadily and sternly at the mean old man, who averted his eyes from those of his son.

‘What is this? You took a bribe, father, to let the affair remain unsifted! For the sake of a few acres of meadow you sacrificed your child!’

‘Fiddlesticks-ends,’ said the manufacturer. ‘I sacrificed nothing. What could I do? If I ran after Eve and found her in some harlequin and columbine booth, could I force her to return? She had made her bed, and must lie on it. What could I gain by stirring in the matter? Let sleeping dogs lie.’

‘Father,’ said Jasper, very gravely, ‘the fact remains that you took money that looks to me very much like a bribe to shut your eyes.’

‘Pshaw! pshaw! I had made up my mind. I was full of anger against Eve. I would not have taken her into my house had I met her. Fine scandals I should have had with her there! Better let her run and disappear in the mud, than come muddy into my parlour and besmire all the furniture and me with it, and perhaps damage the business. These children of mine have eaten sour grapes, and the parent’s teeth are set on edge. It all comes’—the old man brought his fist down on the table—‘of my accursed folly in bringing strange blood into the house, and now the chastisement is on me. Are you come back to live with me, Jasper? Will you help me again in the mill?’

‘Never again, father, never,’ answered the young man, standing up. ‘Never, after what I have just heard. I shall do what I can to find my poor sister, Eve Jordan’s mother. It is a duty—a duty your neglect has left to me; a duty hard to take up after it has been laid aside for seventeen years; a duty betrayed for a sum of money.’

‘Pshaw!’ The old man put his hands in his pockets and walked about the room. He was shrunk with age; his eagle profile was without beauty or dignity.

Jasper followed him with his eye, reproachfully, sorrowfully.

‘Father,’ he said, ‘it seems to me as if that money was hush-money, and that you, by taking it, had brought the blood of your child on your own head.’

‘Blood! Fiddlesticks! Blood! There is no blood in the case. If she chose to run, how was I to stop her? Blood, indeed! Red raddle!’

CHAPTER XXX.

BETRAYAL.

BARBARA came out on the platform of rock. Eve stood before her trembling, with downcast eyes, conscious of having done wrong, and of being put in a position from which it was difficult to escape.

Barbara had walked fast. She was hot and excited, and her temper was roused. She loved Eve dearly, but Eve tried her.

'Eve,' she said sharply, 'what is the meaning of this? Who has been here with you?'

The young girl hung her head.

'What is the meaning of this?' she repeated, and her tone of voice showed her irritation. Barbara had a temper.

Eve murmured an inarticulate reply.

'What is it? I cannot understand. Jane came tearing home with a rhodomontade about a boy jumping down on her from a tree, and I saw him just now at the gate making faces at me. He put his fingers into his mouth, hooted like an owl, and dived into the bushes. What is the meaning of this?'

Eve burst into tears, and hid her face on her sister's neck.

'Come, come,' said Barbara, somewhat mollified, 'I must be told all. Your giddiness is leading you into a hobble. Who was that on the rock with you? I caught a glimpse of a man as I passed the Scotch fir, and I thought the voice I heard was that of Jasper.'

The girl still cried, cried out of confusion, because she did not know how to answer her sister. She must not tell the truth; the secret had been confided to her. Poor Martin's safety must not be jeopardised by her. Barbara was so hot, impetuous, and frank, that she might let out about him, and so he might be arrested. What was she to say and do?

'Come back with me,' said Barbara, drawing her sister's hand through her arm. 'Now then, Eve, there must be no secrets with me. You have no mother; I stand to you in the place of mother and sister in one. Was that Jasper?'

Eve's hand quivered on her sister's arm; in a faint voice she answered, 'Yes, Barbara.' Had Miss Jordan looked round she would have seen her sister's face crimson with shame. But Barbara turned her eyes away to the far-off pearly range of Cornish mountains, sighed, and said nothing.

The two girls walked together through the wood without speaking till they came to the gate, and there they entered the atmosphere of honeysuckle fragrance.

'Perhaps that boy thought he would scare me as he scared Jane,' said Barbara. 'He was mistaken. Who was he?'

'Jasper's brother,' answered Eve, in a low tone. She was full of sorrow and humiliation at having told Barbara an untruth, her poor little soul was tossed with conflicting emotions, and Barbara felt her emotion through the little hand resting on her arm. Eve had joined her hands, so that as she walked she was completely linked to her dear elder sister.

Presently Eve said timidly, 'Bab, darling, it was not Mr. Jasper.'

'Who was the man, then?'

'I cannot, I must not tell.'

'That will do,' said Barbara, decidedly; 'say no more about it, Eve; I know that you met Jasper Babb and no one else.'

'Well,' whispered Eve, 'don't be cross with me. I did not know he was there. I had no idea.'

'It *was* Mr. Babb?' asked Barbara, suddenly turning and looking steadily at her.

Here was an opportunity offered a poor, weak creature. Eve trembled, and after a moment's vacillation fell into the pitfall unconsciously dug for her by her sister. 'It was Mr. Babb, dear Barbara.'

Miss Jordan said no more, her bosom was heaving. Perhaps she could not speak. She was angry, troubled, distracted; angry at the gross imposition practised by Jasper in pretending to leave the place, whilst lurking about it to hold secret meetings with her sister; troubled she was because she feared that Eve had connived at his proceedings, and had lost her heart to him; troubled also because she could not tell to what this would lead; distracted she was, because she did not know what steps to take. Before she reached home she had made up her mind, and on reaching Morwell she acted on it with promptitude, leaving Eve to go to her room or stay below as suited her best.

She went direct to her father. He was sitting up, looking worse and distressed; his pale forehead was beaded with perspiration; his shaking hand clutched the table, then relaxed its hold, then clutched again.

'Are you feeling worse, papa?'

'No,' he answered, without looking at her, but with his dazed

eyes directed through the window. 'No—only for black thoughts. They come flying to me. If you stand at evening under a great rock, as soon as the sun sets you see from all quarters the ravens flying towards it, uttering doleful cries, and they enter into the clefts and disappear for the night. The whole rock all night is alive with ravens. So is it with me. As my day declines the sorrows and black thoughts come back to lodge in me, and torment me with their clawing and pecking and croaking. There is no driving them away. They come back.'

'Dear papa,' said Barbara, 'I am afraid I must add to them. I have something very unpleasant to communicate.'

'I suppose,' said Mr. Jordan, peevishly, 'you are out of coffee, or the lemons are mouldy, or the sheets have been torn on the thorn hedge. These matters do not trouble me.' He signed with his finger. 'They are like black spots in the air, but instead of floating they fly, and they all fly one way—towards me.'

'Father, I am afraid for Eve!'

'What?' His face was full of terror. 'What of her? What is there to fear? Is she ill?'

'It is, dearest papa, as I foresaw. She has set her heart on Mr. Jasper, and she meets him secretly. He asked leave of you yesterday to go home to Buckfastleigh; but he has not gone there. He has not left this neighbourhood. He is secreting himself somewhere, and this evening he met darling Eve on the Raven Rock, when he knew you were here ill and I was in the house with you.'

'I cannot believe it,' said Mr. Jordan, with every token of distress, wiping his wet brow with his thin hands, clasping his hands, plucking at his waistcoat, biting his quivering lips.

'It is true, dearest papa. Eve took Jane with her as far as the gate, and there an ugly boy, who, Eve tells me, is Jasper's brother, scared the girl away. I hurried off to the Rock as soon as told of this, and I saw through an opening of the trees some one with Eve, and heard a voice like that of Mr. Jasper. When I charged Eve with having met him she could not deny it.'

'What does he want? Why did he ask to leave?'

'I can put but one interpretation on his conduct. I have for some time suspected a growing attachment between him and Eve. I suppose he knows that you never would consent——'

'Never, never!' He clenched his hands, raised them over his head, uttered a cry, and dropped them.

'Do be careful, dear papa,' said Barbara. 'You forget your wound; you must not raise your right arm.'

'It cannot be! It cannot be! Never, never!' He was intensely moved, and paid no heed to his daughter's caution. She caught his right hand, held it between her own firmly, and kissed it. 'My God!' cried the unhappy man. 'Spare me this! It cannot be! The black spots come thick as rain.' He waved his left hand as though warding off something. 'Not as rain—as bullets.'

'No, papa, as you say, it never, never can be.'

'Never!' he said eagerly, his wild eyes kindling with a lambent terror. 'There stands between them a barrier that must cut them off the one from the other for ever. But of that you know nothing.'

'It is so,' said Barbara; 'there does stand an impassable barrier between them. I know more than you suppose, dear papa. Knowing what I do I have wondered at your permitting his presence in this house.'

'You know?' He looked at her, and pressed his brow. 'And Eve, does she know?'

'She knows nothing,' answered Barbara; 'I alone—that is, you and I together—alone know all about him. I found out when he first came here and was ill.'

'From anything he said?'

'No—I found a bundle of his clothes.'

'I do not understand.'

'It came about this way. There was a roll on the saddle of his horse, and when I came to undo it, that I might put it away, I found that it was a convict suit.' Mr. Jordan stared. 'Yes!' continued Barbara, speaking quickly, anxious to get the miserable tale told. 'Yes, papa, I found the garments which betrayed him. When he came to himself I showed them to him, and asked if they were his. Afterwards I heard all the particulars: how he had robbed his own father of the money laid by to repay you an old loan, how his father had prosecuted him, and how he had been sent to prison; how also he had escaped from prison. It was as he was flying to the Tamar to cross it and get as far as he could from pursuit that he met with his accident and remained here.'

'Merciful heaven!' exclaimed Mr. Jordan; 'you knew all this, and never told me!'

'I told no one,' answered Barbara, 'because I promised him that I would not betray him, and even now I would have said

nothing about it, but that you tell me that you know it as well as I. No,' she added, after having drawn a long breath, 'no, not even after all the provocation he has given would I betray him.'

Mr. Jordan looked as one dazed.

'Where, then, are these clothes—this convict suit?'

'In the garret. I hid them there.'

'Let me see them. I cannot yet understand.'

Barbara left the room, and shortly returned with the bundle. She unfolded it, and spread the garments before her father. He rubbed his eyes, pressed his knuckles against his temples, and stared at them with astonishment.

'So, then, it was he—Jasper Babb—who stole Eve's money?'

'Yes, papa.'

'And he was taken and locked up for doing so—where?'

'In Prince's Town prison.'

'And he escaped?'

'Yes, papa. As I was on my way to Ashburton, I passed through Prince's Town, and thus heard of it.'

'Barbara, why did you keep this secret from me? If I had known it, I would have run and taken the news myself to the police and the warders, and have had him recaptured whilst he was ill in bed, unable to escape.'

It was now Barbara's turn to express surprise.

'But, dear papa, what do you mean? You have told me yourself that you knew all about Mr. Jasper.'

'I knew nothing of this. My God! How thick the black spots are, and how big and pointed!'

'Papa dear, what do you mean? You assured me you knew everything.'

'I knew nothing of this. I had not the least suspicion.'

'But, papa'—Barbara was sick with terror—'you told me that this stood as a bar between him and Eve?'

'No—Barbara. I said that there was a barrier, but not this. Of this I was ignorant.'

The room swam round with Barbara. She uttered a faint cry, and put the back of her clenched hands against her mouth to choke another rising cry. 'I have betrayed him! My God! My God! What have I done?'

CHAPTER XXXI.

CALLED TO ACCOUNT.

‘Go,’ said Mr. Jordan, ‘bring Eve to me.’

Barbara obeyed mechanically. She had betrayed Jasper. Her father would not spare him. The granite walls of Prince’s Town prison rose before her, in the midst of a waste as bald as any in Greenland or Siberia. She called her sister, bade her go into her father’s room, and then, standing in the hall, placed her elbows on the window ledge, and rested her brow and eyes in her palms. She was consigning Jasper back to that miserable jail. She was incensed against him. She knew that he was unworthy of her regard, that he had forfeited all right to her consideration, and yet—she pitied him. She could not bring herself to believe that he was utterly bad; to send him again to prison was to ensure his complete ruin.

‘Eve,’ said Mr. Jordan, when his youngest daughter came timidly into the room, ‘tell me, whom did you meet on the Raven Rock?’

The girl hung her head and made no reply. She stood as a culprit before a judge, conscious that his case is hopeless.

‘Eve,’ he said again, ‘I insist on knowing. Whom did you meet?’

She tried to speak, but something rose in her throat and choked her. She raised her eyes timidly to her father, who had never, hitherto, spoken an angry word to her. Tears and entreaty were in her eyes, but the room was dark, night had fallen, and he could not see her face.

‘Eve, tell me, was it Babb?’

She burst into a storm of sobs, and threw herself on her knees. ‘Oh, papa! sweetest, dearest papa! Do not ask me! I must not tell. I promised him not to say. It is as much as his life is worth. He says he never will be taken alive. If it were known that he was here the police would be after him. Papa dear!’ she clasped and fondled and kissed his hand, she bathed it in her tears, ‘do not be angry with me. I can bear anything but that. I do love you so, dear, precious papa!’

‘My darling,’ he replied, ‘I am not angry. I am troubled. I am on a rock and hold you in my arms, and the black sea is rising—I can feel it. Leave me alone, I am not myself.’

An hour later Barbara came in.

‘What, papa—without a light?’

‘Yes—it is dark everywhere, within as without. The black spots have run one into another and filled me. It will be better soon. When Jasper Babb shows his face again, he shall be given up.’

‘Oh, papa, let him escape this time. All we now want is to get him away from this place, away from Eve.’

‘All we now want!’ repeated Mr. Jordan. ‘Let the man off who has beggared Eve!’

‘Papa, Eve will be well provided for.’

‘He has robbed her.’

‘But, dear papa, consider. He has been your guest. He has worked for you, he has eaten at your table, partaken of your salt. When you were hurt he carried you to your bed. He has been a devoted servant to you.’

‘We are quits,’ said Mr. Jordan. ‘He was nursed when he was ill. That makes up for all the good he has done me. Then there is that other account which can never be made up.’

‘I am sure, papa, he repents.’

‘And tries to snatch away Eve, as he has snatched away her fortune?’

‘Papa, there I think he may be excused. Consider how beautiful Eve is. It is quite impossible for a man to see her and not love her. I do not myself know what love is, but I have read about it, and I have fancied to myself what it is—a kind of madness that comes on one and obscures the judgment. I do not believe that Mr. Jasper had any thought of Eve at first, but little by little she won him. You know, papa, how she has run after him, like a kitten; and so she has stolen his heart out of his breast before he knew what she was about. Then, after that, everything—honour, duty, went. I dare say it is very hard for one who loves to think calmly and act conscientiously! Would you like the lights brought in, papa?’

He shook his head.

‘You must not remain up longer than you can bear,’ she said. She took a seat on a stool, and leaned her head on her hand, her elbow resting on her knee. ‘Papa, whilst I have been waiting in the hall, I have turned the whole matter over and over in my mind. Papa, I suppose that Eve’s mother was very, very beautiful?’

He sighed in the dark and put his hands together. The pale

twilight through the window shone on them; they were white and ghost-like.

‘Papa dear, I suppose that you saw her when she was ill every day, and got to love her. I dare say you struggled against the feeling, but your heart was too strong for your head and carried your resolutions away, just as I have seen a flood on the Tamar against the dam at Abbotsweare; it has burst through all obstructions, and in a moment every trace of the dam has disappeared. You were under the same roof with her. Then there came a great ache here’—she touched her heart—‘allowing you no rest. Well, dear papa, I think it must have been so with Mr. Babb. He saw our dear sweet Eve daily, and love for her swelled in his heart; he formed the strongest resolutions, and platted them with the toughest considerations, and stamped and wedged them in with vigorous effort, but all was of no avail—the flood rose and burst over it and carried all away.’

Mr. Jordan was touched by the allusion to his dead or lost wife, but not in the manner Barbara intended.

‘I have heard,’ continued Barbara, ‘that Eve’s mother was brought to this house very ill, and that you cared for her till she was recovered. Was it in this room? Was it in this bed?’

She heard a low moan, and saw the white hands raised in deprecation, or in prayer.

‘Then you sat here and watched her; and when she was in fever you suffered; when her breath came so faint that you thought she was dying, your very soul stood on tiptoe, agonised. When her eyes opened with reason in them, your heart leaped. When she slept, you sat here with your eyes on her face and could not withdraw them. Perhaps you took her hand in the night, when she was vexed with horrible dreams, and the pulse of your heart sent its waves against her hot, tossing, troubled heart, and little by little cooled that fire, and brought peace to that unrest. Papa, I dare say that somehow thus it came about that Eve got interested in Mr. Jasper and grew to love him. I often let her take my place when he was ill. You must excuse dearest Eve. It was my fault. I should have been more cautious. But I thought nothing of it then. I knew nothing of how love is sown, and throws up its leaves, and spreads and fills the whole heart with a tangle of roots.’

In this last half-hour Barbara had drawn nearer to her father than in all her previous life. For once she had entered into his thoughts, roused old recollections, both sweet and bitter—inex-

pressibly sweet, unutterably bitter—and his heart was full of tears.

‘Was Eve’s mother as beautiful as our darling?’

‘Oh yes, Barbara!’ His voice shook, and he raised his white hands to cover his eyes. ‘Even more beautiful.’

‘And you loved her with all your heart?’

‘I have never ceased to love her. It is that, Barbara, which’—he put his hands to his head, and she understood him—which disturbed his brain.

‘But,’ he said suddenly, as waking from a dream, ‘Barbara, how do you know all this? Who told you?’

She did not answer him, but she rose, knelt on a stool, put her arms round his neck, and kissed him. Her cheeks were wet.

‘You are crying, Barbara.’

‘I am thinking of your sorrows, dear papa.’

She was still kneeling on one knee, with her arms around her father. ‘Poor papa! I want to know really what became of Eve’s mother.’

The door was thrown open.

‘Yes; that is what I have come to ask,’ said Jasper, entering the room, holding a wax candle in each hand. He had intercepted the maid, Jane, with the candles, taken them from her, and as she opened the door entered, to hear Barbara’s question. The girl turned, dropped one arm, but clung with the other to her father, who had just placed one of his hands on her head. Her eyes, from having been so long in the dark, were very large. She was pale, and her cheeks glistened with tears.

She was too astonished to recover herself at once, dazzled by the strong light; she could not see Jasper, but she knew his voice.

He put the candlesticks—they were of silver—on the table, shut the door behind him, and standing before Mr. Jordan with bowed head, his earnest eyes fixed on the old man’s face, he said again, ‘Yes, that is what I have come to ask. Where is Eve’s mother?’

No one spoke. Barbara recovered herself first; she rose from the stool, and stepped between her father and the steward.

‘It is not you,’ she said, ‘who have a right to ask questions. It is we who have to call you to account.’

‘For what, Miss Jordan?’ He spoke to her with deference—a certain tone of reverence which never left him when addressing her.

‘You must give an account of yourself,’ she said.

‘I am just returning from Buckfastleigh,’ he answered.

‘And, pray, how is your father who was dying?’ she asked, with a curl of her lip and a quiver of contempt in her voice.

‘He is well,’ replied Jasper. ‘I was deceived about his sickness. He has not been ill. I was sent on a fool’s errand.’

‘Then,’ said Mr. Jordan, who had recovered himself, ‘what about the money?’

‘The recovery of that is as distant as ever, but also as certain.’

‘Mr. Jasper Babb,’ exclaimed Ignatius Jordan, ‘you have not been to Buckfastleigh at all. You have not seen your father; you have deceived me with—’

Barbara hastily interrupted him, saying with beating heart, and with colour rising to her pale cheeks, ‘I pray you, I pray you, say no more. We know very well that you have not left this neighbourhood.’

‘I do not understand you, Miss Jordan. I am but just returned. My horse is not yet unsaddled.’

‘Not another word,’ exclaimed the girl, with pain in her voice. ‘Not another word if you wish us to retain a particle of regard for you. I have pitied you, I have excused you, but if you *lie*—I have said the word, I cannot withdraw it—I give you up.’ Fire was in her heart, tears in her throat.

‘I will speak,’ said Jasper. ‘I value your regard, Miss Jordan, above everything that the world contains. I cannot tamely lose that. There has been a misapprehension. How it has arisen I do not know, but arisen it has, and dissipated it shall be. It is true, as I said, that I was deceived about my father’s condition, wilfully, maliciously deceived. I rode yesterday to Buckfastleigh, and have but just returned. If my father had been dying you would not have seen me here so soon.’

‘We cannot listen to this. We cannot endure this,’ cried Barbara. ‘Will you madden me, after all that has been done for you? It is cruel, cruel!’ Then, unable to control the flood of tears that rose to her eyes, she left the room and the glare of candles.

Jasper approached Mr. Jordan. He had not lost his self-restraint. ‘I do not comprehend this charge of falsehood brought against me. I can bring you a token that I have seen my father, a token you will not dispute. He has told me who your second wife was. She was my sister. Will you do me the justice to say that you believe me?’

‘Yes,’ answered the old man, faintly.

'May I recall Miss Jordan? I cannot endure that she should suppose me false.'

'If you will.'

'One word more. Do you wish our kinship to be known to her, or is it to be kept a secret, at least for a while?'

'Do not tell her.'

Then Jasper went out into the hall. Barbara was there, in the window, looking out into the dusk through the dull old glass of the lattice.

'Miss Jordan,' said he, 'I have ventured to ask you to return to your father, and receive his assurance that I spoke the truth.'

'But,' exclaimed Barbara, turning roughly upon him, 'you were on the Raven Rock with my sister at sunset, and had your brother planted at the gate to watch against intruders.'

'My brother?'

'Yes, a boy.'

'I do not understand you.'

'It is true. I saw him—I saw you. Eve confessed it. What do you say to that?'

Jasper bit his thumb.

Barbara laughed bitterly.

'I know why you pretended to go away—because a policeman was here on Sunday, and you were afraid. Take care! I have betrayed you. Your secret is known. You are not safe here.'

'Miss Jordan,' said the young man quietly, 'you are mistaken. I did not meet your sister. I would not deceive you for all the world contains. I warn you that Miss Eve is menaced, and I was sent out of the way lest I should be here to protect her.'

Barbara gave a little contemptuous gasp.

'I cannot listen to you any longer,' she said angrily. 'Take my warning. Leave this place. It is no longer safe. I tell you—I—yes, I have betrayed you.'

'I will not go,' said Jasper, 'I dare not. I have the interest of your family too near my heart to leave.'

'You will not go!' exclaimed Barbara, trembling with anger and scorn. 'I neither believe you nor trust you. I'—she set her teeth and said through them, with her heart in her mouth—'Jasper, I *hate* you!'

(To be continued.)

Suggested Prologue to a Dramatised Version of 'She.'

SCENE.

*The Ruined Temple of Truth. Moonlight. Statue
of Truth looming up in background.*

Enter AYESHA, veiled; AMENARTAS (dark and handsome Egyptian woman); Amahagger savages bearing a covered corpse on rude stretcher.

Ayesha (in tones of command). Set down, set down. Enough have we journeyed, and heavy is the burden—ay, heavy!

[The bearers set down the litter, and withdraw. AYESHA draws near and stands at head of corpse, AMENARTAS at its feet. AMENARTAS gazes at corpse and sobs, then with a fierce look at AYESHA, steps forward and draws the shroud revealing KALLIKRATES dead, and speaks.]

Witch, look on him thou slewest.

¹ This Prologue is designed to explain to the spectator, in as few words as possible, such of the antecedent circumstances as are necessary to the right understanding of the tragedy.

Ayesha. What need to look, Egyptian? Are not those features so graved upon my heart that no time can smooth away their fixed awfulness? Oh! I am marble, and Death's dull hand hath limned his dreadful aspect on my whiteness. Oh! I am water, and barren Death doth overhang me, and ever my chill breast must picture his solemnity. Nay, I am ice, all ice, set in a sunless region. Death is my life, and like the white sea mountains of the North I must float upon a tideless sea bearing this (*points to corpse*) within my frozen heart.

Amenartas. And I? Tell me, most wise sorceress, what fate is mine?

Ayesha. Thou shalt die.

Amenartas. Wilt slay me also?

Ayesha. Nay; could I have slain thee, Egyptian, long hadst thou been dead. Get thee hence. Thou hast my safe-conduct. Get thee gone—I find the means—and leave me with my woe.

Amenartas. And what of my woe? Can I leave *my* sorrows with thee also?

Ayesha. Thy woe, thou pitiful nothing! Thy woe, thou falling leaf, thou ravelling shred, thou worm burrowing to the grave! A little space, a few short years, and age will draw its sting. Time shall breathe on it and it shall die, and Death shall bury it. It will wither like the earthly stamp of beauty on thy brow—and, fading as the hot red clouds of sunset, be swallowed in the grey forgetfulness of night.

Amenartas. After night, the dawn. Live on Immortal; for thee the night, for me the morning!

Ayesha. Fool, cease thy folly! For me is neither night nor morning. All Time is mine. I tell thee that when I stood within those raging flames the Gates of Death flew wide, and like a wandering star my soul was swept through the dark untravelled void of ages infinite and to come. The distances of unhorizoned Time opened and drew near; their broad ways were spread before my conquering feet. Alas! I am undying, and there lies the token of my doom!

Amenartas. Aye, Sorceress, thy doom! Down that dagger blade of thine swift sped the lightning of thy doom searing thy soul. But two nights gone thou drewest it from Heaven to be thy guerdon till all nights are done. Let it blast thy deathless heart; let it blast thee everlastingly! Hug that cold corpse to thy colder breast; let thine immortality make merry with its corruption! Take thou yon clay-clad form and leave me the Spirit thou hast loosed. That is my part, and there lies thine. 'Tis me he loves; not thee. When radiant in thy magic splendour thou didst pass from the Flame of Life and beckon him to thy bright breast, say did he come? Or did he turn to me, his wife, and cast his arms about me, crying, 'Witch, begone, and leave me to my mortal love!'

Ayesha. Yea, that he did, but not for love of thee, Egyptian. The sight of my unveiled glory did but confuse his sense. He spoke from out a heart of fear, and not for hatred's sake.

Amenartas. Aye, and so well thou knewest this that thou from out a heart of jealous rage didst smite him dead, there in the Place of Life.

Ayesha. I smote, because my passion made me mad. Or was it Destiny writing his purpose with my dagger point, and severing the present with its quick edge from that which is not yet? Know thou this cold body is a seed that still shall bloom in radiant life and bear a fruit of love so glorious that all the desolate ages of its growth shall be forgotten at the plucking. I have sown in the grave of Time, and Time in his increase shall bring my happy harvest to the sickle. Think of it! Kallikrates shall live again and love me.

Amenartas. Thou speakest truth. Thou hast sown and thou shalt reap. Fruitful shall be thy sin, for its grown weight at length shall crush thee when thou reachest out thy hand to pluck. Live on Immortal, and feed upon thy memories; aye, bear up thy heavy heart with glittering hopes that from century to century bubble-like shall burst upon the bitter air. I also have a voice of truth, and I tell thee that Kallikrates shall live again, and ruin shall he give thee for thy love. By Osiris the justified I swear it. I curse thee, and I doom thee. Mine he is, and mine he shall be for ever. While thou watchest in thy long pain I shall sweetly sleep; and when thy watching is outworn, then shall I awake and grasp the opportunity.

Ayesha (fiercely). Begone! Tarry no more, lest from out my

secret strength I do summon such a spell as shall fix thee here for ever. (*Claps her hands.*) Ho! slaves! (*Amahagger soldiers appear.*) Lead this woman hence—ye know whither.

[AMENARTAS waves them back imperiously, so that they stand irresolute at end of stage, and out of hearing.]

Amenartas. I go. I go to fulfil my fate. Remain thou and work out thine. Vengeance be on thee; vengeance heaped and piled; vengeance to be measured only by thy length of days, and with each day more fearfully reborn! From me shall spring its seed. From child to child in the unbegotten ages shall go the message of my malison, till one to be at length shall wreak its utter and most hideous weight upon thy majesty. Ayesha, fare thee well, till *thou* the conquered and *I* the conqueror shall meet upon another shore. (*Bends forward as though to kneel down and kiss the corpse.* AYESHA interposes.)

Ayesha. Begone! Touch him not! I say—away with her!

[*Amahagger soldiers advance and seize AMENARTAS by the arms, but without violence, and draw her away. At the exit she wrenches herself free, and casts one look at the corpse and one at AYESHA, and speaks.*]

From thy sight I go. But when in far distant time once more with the reborn Kallikrates thou standest in the Place of Life, then, Sorceress, perish miserably in thy sorcery, and, perishing, think on me. (*Goes.*)

Ayesha (soliloquises). And thou art gone, leaving me—this. Ah! how heavily thy words do knock upon the gates of sense. Can they be truth? Can he be thine, not mine? Can he be both thine and mine? Why then in this one Fate-fashioned love shall perish Opposites and we find unity! Nay, I alone shall triumph. Let me fail and fail again; let me live a hundred lives and die a hundred deaths, yet mine shall be the victory. (*Covers up corpse.*) And now, oh my cold companion, let us hence to keep our vigils of the night, and in solemn patience outwear the stretching distances of time. Sleep on, Kallikrates! and I will watch thy sleep, till at the last the furthest heights are gained and the hour of waking falls across Death's winding snows, and hand in hand we watch the daybreak steal through the eternal skies and see Love's glory come.

(*Curtain falls for an interval of two thousand years.*)

H. RIDER HAGGARD.

The Anatomy of Acting.

VIII.

WERE I now re-issuing my interrogatory I should omit the sixth section. Its results can at best prove or disprove an extreme corollary to Diderot's theory, which, though strictly logical, has never been seriously advanced. One or two of the replies I have received throw a curious light upon the question of double consciousness suggested in Section 9, and may be referred to hereafter. For the present I pass on to the two following sections.

7. It used to be said of a well-known actor that he put on in the morning the character he was to play at night; that on days when he was to play Richard III. he was truculent, cynical, and cruel, while on days when he was to play Mercutio or Benedick he would be all grace, humour, and courtesy. Are you conscious of any such tendency in yourself? or have you observed it in others? In the green-room, between the acts, have you any tendency to preserve the voice and manner of the character you are playing? or have you observed such a tendency in others?

8. G. H. Lewes relates how Macready, as Shylock, used to shake a ladder violently before going on for the scene with Tubal, in order to get up 'the proper state of white heat'; also how Liston was overheard 'cursing and spluttering to himself, as he stood at the side scene waiting to go on in a scene of comic rage.' Have you experienced any difficulty in thus 'striking twelve at once'? If so, how do you overcome it?

These sections in reality bear upon the same point—the necessity or desirability of attaining and preserving a certain emotional level before and during the performance of an arduous part. It may be said that Macready and Liston could not affect their emotional states by shaking a ladder and spluttering, these being merely mechanical devices for producing extreme muscular mobility. This argument, however, ignores the undoubted tendency of outward expression to react upon emotion. 'He who

gives away to violent gestures,' says Darwin, 'will increase his rage; he who does not control the signs of fear will experience fear in a greater degree. . . . Even the simulation of an emotion tends to arouse it in our minds.' It is of course conceivable that Macready may have kept his mind perfectly calm while he worked up the muscular tremor of fury; but the supposition is difficult. The most intimate correlations can by practice be overcome, just as a juggler can keep five balls in the air with his right hand while with his left he plays 'Home, sweet home' upon the concertina. Diderot would tell us that Macready ought to have performed a similar feat, but there is no evidence that he did perform it. 'There is reason to suspect,' says Darwin again, 'that the muscular system requires some short preparation, or some degree of innervation, before being brought into strong action.' Macready's primary object, no doubt, was to mobilise his muscles, but he probably knew very well that in doing so he mobilised his mind.

I need scarcely say that none of my informants confesses to 'putting on in the morning the character he is to play at night.' That is simply a joke current among the supporters of a certain tragedian, who, unhappily, played Richard too often for their comfort. There is a similar legend about Mossop, who was said to 'order his dinner according to the part he had to act: sausages and Zanga, rump-steaks and Richard, pork-chops and Pierre, veal-cutlets and Barbarossa.' The same practice is attributed, on his own authority, to a living actor of some eminence in his day, who has now retired from the stage. 'When I am to play a brawny Briton,' he used to say, 'I dine on beef-steak and porter. When I have to portray the elegant graces of a Benedick my dinner is a woodcock on toast and a bottle of burgundy.' This method of tempering the gastric juices might be indefinitely refined upon. Mr. Irving ought to dine on devilled kidneys before playing Mephistopheles. When *Macbeth* is in the bill, haggis should reek on the tragedian's board, and hasty-pudding should put him i' the vein for Lear.

But if no one 'puts on in the morning the character he is to play at night,' almost every one who is accustomed to highly emotional or even strongly marked characters admits the desirability of (so to speak) keeping the thread unbroken from first to last. Some actors carry this to the length of retaining in the green-room the manner and voice of the character they happen to be playing on the stage. 'I observed this tendency in Macready,' writes Mr. John Coleman, 'and Charles Kean had the same peculiarity in a

less degree.' Mr. Kendal, too, used to notice this habit in Charles Kean and thought it an affectation. So it was, no doubt; but the affectation may have arisen, not from vanity, but from deliberate artistic purpose. Mr. Kendal himself admits that between the acts of such a play as *The Ironmaster*, in which he leaves the stage and returns to it in high emotion, he would not willingly lapse into levity, because it would cost him unnecessary trouble to regain the right pitch of feeling. Many actors assure me that it is common for tragedians to shut themselves up in their dressing-rooms between the acts of a play, and to reassume their personage immediately on being called, sometimes even timing their walk from the dressing-room door to the wing, so as to be able to step upon the stage without a moment's pause. Between Othello's exit and re-entrance in the third act Mr. John Coleman would always prowling up and down behind the scenes like a wild animal, the stage being kept clear in order that he might be safe from interruption. 'I always endeavour,' writes Mr. Wilson Barrett, 'to get a short time to myself, in my dressing-room, to think over my character and work myself into it, so to speak. It is a trouble and annoyance to me to converse on any subject while waiting to commence my work. I have noticed the same thing in other actors.' Miss Ellen Wallis, who has certainly done more than any other living actress to keep alive in the provinces the traditions of poetic drama, tells me that between the acts of a heavy part she always retires to her dressing-room and maintains absolute silence, not speaking even to her maid if she can help it. She relates, too, how she once visited Ristori in her dressing-room between the acts of *Mary Stuart*, immediately after the scene between Mary and Elizabeth. The great actress received her, as it were, enthroned, and, though perfectly cordial, never once throughout the interview relaxed her queenly bearing. 'Affectation!' the reader may say; but again I add, affectation with an artistic purpose. Let me mention in passing that Ristori, in her recently published Memoirs, professes herself a thorough emotionalist. She even goes the length of declaring that she never could 'feel' the passage where Mary Stuart pleads guilty to the murder of Darnley, because her historical studies had convinced her that this was a mistake on Schiller's part and that Mary was innocent!

As to 'striking twelve at once,' there are innumerable testimonies to the difficulty of the feat, and different artists employ different methods of overcoming it. It is recorded of Baron that

before going on the stage in a scene of high excitement, 'il se battait les flancs pour se passionner; il apostrophait avec aigreur et injuriait tous ceux qui se présentaient à lui, valets et camarades de l'un et de l'autre sexe, et il appelait cela "respecter le parterre."' This was practically the system of Macready; and a tradition of the Edinburgh theatre tells of an actor-manager who carried the same method to a length which neither Baron nor Macready thought necessary. When going on in a particular situation of great excitement, he used to work himself up by kicking the property-man; it being understood that he should afterwards apologise and give the fellow a shilling. One night, when the house was very bad, the property-man planted himself at the wing to receive the accustomed kicking; but the canny actor-manager restrained himself, saying as he passed him by, 'Not to-night, Barkins; the treasury won't stand it.' This gentleman's respect for the property man varied in the inverse ratio of his respect for the pit.

Many of my informants admit that; though they do not shake ladders or kick property-men, they adopt mechanical means of less violence in order to work themselves up before an excited entrance. They mumble to themselves through their clenched teeth, snap their fingers, hold up their hands and shake them rapidly with a loose wrist, or 'stand rigidly and rock the body to and fro with gradually increasing nerve-tension.' Mr. Arthur Cecil informs me that Phelps used always to stand muttering to himself before making his entrance. One night, during the run of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at the Gaiety, Phelps lost his way in the intricate passages between his dressing-room and the stage, and was not to be found when his cue was given. The 'wait' was becoming noticeable, when Mr. George Belmore, who happened to be standing at the wing, bethought him to imitate the muttered thunder which used to announce the actor's approach. He thus kept the audience in the belief that the delay was an intentional effect, until the missing Falstaff was rescued from the labyrinth. As a rule, however, mental concentration, rather than any physical device, is resorted to in order to overcome the difficulty of 'striking twelve at once.' A favourite, and of course a very obvious, method is to stand at the wing and drink in every word of the dialogue leading up to the difficult entrance, in order to become impregnated with the spirit of the situation. This was the method adopted by Mrs. Siddons; and it is worth noting that the Tubal scene, to which the anecdote of Macready

refers, is one in which no such process is possible, Shylock's entrance following immediately upon a few words of trivial conversation between Salanio and Salarino. Mrs. John Wood writes as follows:—'I once had a lesson that taught me the value of this concentration of mind, and I have never forgotten it. The character I was playing was a wild, uncouth, ragged creature, who was devoted to the villain of the piece, he being the only person who had ever bestowed upon her a kindly thought. For this he became her idol. She watched his words and footsteps, and aided him innocently in his acts of villainy. At last she fancies that he loves the heroine, and, in her jealousy, imagines his love returned. She follows him; he meets the lady of his love; and she overhears him pour forth his passion. She does not wait to hear the heroine's reply, but rushes at her like a very tigress. The audience waited breathlessly for this supreme moment of the girl's fury, and the scene ended in a most pathetic manner, the sympathy of the public being greatly excited on this poor creature's behalf. I used conscientiously to listen to the preceding scene, and by so doing was really worked up to the right pitch of excitement when my cue came. One night several of the company, convulsed with laughter, took off my attention by telling me of a great joke they were going to play off upon an unfortunate actor in the next piece. This thoughtlessness ruined my scene. I could not act up to the situation. I did not *feel* it. No amount of art can make up for the want of one real touch of nature. I then found out that they must be *combined* to produce an electrical effect upon your audience.' Miss Wallis instances Isabella's entrance in the last act of *Measure for Measure* as a case in which she has found great difficulty in 'striking twelve at once.' Her plan is to station herself at her entrance and listen intently to the opening speeches of the scene—the Duke's compliments to Angelo—and so work up her indignation for the great outburst of 'Justice, O royal Duke!' with which she flings herself at his feet. The effort of concentrating the attention is sometimes no less valuable in lowering than in heightening the vitality. Mrs. Kendal tells me that, in order to induce in the lines of her face, and in her whole person, the stony rigidity of Claire in *The Ironmaster*, she has often shut herself up in her dressing-room and deliberately fixed her mind upon all the 'old, unhappy, far-off things' she could think of—the pains, losses, and disappointments of her life. Mr. Bancroft makes a similar statement with regard to the part of Orloff in *Diplomacy*. He used to prepare himself

for the great 'scene of the three men' by the very process employed by Mrs. Kendal. Miss Geneviève Ward, again, writes:—'I find no difficulty in "striking twelve at once" in passionate or mirthful scenes; but before death-scenes I wish to be some time alone. My vitality is so strong that for quiet scenes I need to get my nerves under complete control.'

These anecdotes, I think, are sufficient to prove that many distinguished actors have a difficulty in flinging themselves at one bound into the passion of a scene, and find it advantageous to keep themselves more or less completely in touch with their personage during the whole time of performance. On the other hand we have anecdotes (though I can find but few) of great actors whose extraordinary natural mobility of mind and body enabled them to perform astonishing feats in the way of 'striking twelve at once.' It is reported of Kean and of Rachel that they would at one moment be laughing and joking behind the scenes, and at the next moment on the stage, raving with Lear or writhing with Phèdre; while they had equal facility in stilling the ground-swell of passion at the end of a trying scene. There is no reason to doubt that some temperaments require less 'inner-vation,' to use Darwin's word, than others, or that, with a few, an infinitesimal space of time suffices. It is to be remembered, however, that if the keeping up of a character behind the scenes may be due to affectation, the total dropping of it may, in some cases, be no less affected. There is a motive (the avoidance of ridicule) for the latter affectation, none, except the artistic motive, for the former.

'Le véritable acteur,' says M. Coquelin, 'est toujours prêt. Il peut prendre son rôle à n'importe quel moment, et susciter immédiatement l'impression qu'il désire.' I think there is ample evidence that the veritable actor, in this sense, is a rare bird.

IX.

The real paradox of acting, it seems to me, resolves itself into the paradox of dual consciousness. If it were true that the actor could not experience an emotion without absolutely yielding up his whole soul to it, then Diderot's doctrine, though still a little overstated, would be right in the main. But the mind is not so constituted. If the night of the murder of Duncan had been a fit time for psychological argument, Macduff might safely have moved an amendment to Macbeth's proposition:

Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral in a moment? No man.

There are many 'brownies,' as Mr. Stevenson puts it, in the actor's brain, and one of them may be agonising with Othello, while another is criticising his every tone and gesture, a third restraining him from strangling Iago in good earnest, and a fourth wondering whether the play will be over in time to let him catch his last train. I was anxious to obtain authentic illustrations of this double, triple, and quadruple action of the mind, and to that end framed the following questions:—

IX. Can you give any examples of the two or more strata of consciousness, or lines of thought, which must co-exist in your mind while acting? Or, in other words, can you describe and illustrate how one part of your mind is intent on the character, while another part is watching the audience, and a third (perhaps) given up to some pleasant or unpleasant recollection or anticipation in your private life?

It has been objected that the phrase 'must co-exist' begs the question; but is there really any question to beg? I looked upon the double action of the brain as a matter of universal experience, a thing to be assumed just as one assumes that the normal man has two legs. I did not regard it as a tendency peculiar to actors, but common to all men. It seemed to me, however, that acting must beget special forms of this multiple activity, and I hoped to obtain some clear and convincing illustrations of it. Where my question errs is in not directing special attention to the two modes of activity which are alone essential to my argument—the executant and the critical, they may be called.

Many actors—a surprising number, indeed—seem to be quite unaware of any double action of the mind. Some resent the suggestion, as though it implied carelessness or unconscientiousness on their part. Others simply reply that the actor should be 'absorbed' in his character, and seem powerless to analyse the state they describe as absorption. Others, again, relate curious instances of the freaks of consciousness or of memory which occur in the course of long runs. Mr. Dion Boucicault, for example, states that when he has been playing a part for many months his mind is always occupied with other matters during the performance; 'and this to such a degree that when, desiring for some special reason to act my best, I turn my thoughts upon my part, I forget the words, and, to recover them, feel obliged to think of something else.' Interesting as it is, this experience is not what

I wanted to get at. Here the playing of the part has become quite automatic, leaving the mind free to occupy itself as best it may. The very complex movements of piano-playing have been known (says Dr. Carpenter) to become so purely automatic as to be performed in sleep; and many pianists who know a piece of music thoroughly by heart will go wrong when they attempt to play with the notes before them. There is sometimes a difficulty, of course, in distinguishing between automatic action and the conscious or sub-conscious mental activity to which my question refers.

Here is a case in which this difficulty presents itself. 'Not long ago,' writes Miss Isabel Bateman, 'I had to give a recitation after the play, and, feeling rather anxious about it, I found myself repeating the poem (a long one) during the third act of the play. I went through the whole recitation while acting my part, not only repeating the words, but calling to mind the different effects I wished to produce. I confess this with a feeling of guilt, but I don't think anyone can have noticed a difference in my playing.' The question here is: Had Miss Bateman played her part so long as to have reached the automatic stage? If not, this is a most curious instance of dual action. Mr. Leonard Outram informs me that, in playing James Ralston in the third act of *Jim the Penman*, where Mrs. Ralston cross-questions her husband as to the cause of his nervous excitement, he finds himself reading with full comprehension odds and ends from a newspaper which he happens to have in his hand. Here again one would like to know how often Mr. Outram has played the part; but the passage is one of such complexity that it would certainly take a very long time to render the playing of it quite automatic.

'When working in earnest,' writes Mr. Forbes Robertson, 'I can only admit two strata, so to speak: one stratum, the part, the creature I am for the time; the other, that part of my mind which circumstances and the surroundings compel me to give up to all things coming under the head of mechanical execution. I have experienced the other strata after a long run, and always fight against them, for I know they only mean that my work is getting mechanical.' Even more to the point is the following reply from Miss Janet Achurch: 'The only double line of thought I like to have on the stage is a mental criticism on my own performance: "I got that exclamation better than last night," or "I'm sure I'm playing this scene slower than usual," and so on. I suppose no one can help doing this; but any thought that comes

to my mind outside my part I always stamp out as quickly as possible.' This is precisely the form of experience of which I wished to obtain illustrations. It is my own fault that the wording of my question did not more clearly indicate its intention.

Some artists who profess themselves unconscious of any double action of the mind, unintentionally bear witness to its existence. 'There is no better sponge for one's tears,' says an actor of great pathetic power, 'than the sight of an overfed noodle asleep in the stalls'; and a very distinguished actress confesses to having 'played at' a peculiarly stolid and stony woman of fashion whom she observed among the audience, determined to move her or perish in the attempt. Here we have clearly an attitude of mind quite inconsistent with 'absorption' in the obvious sense of the word. Another leading actor mentions a curious circumstance which bears upon this point. If a momentary uneasiness causes him to make some slight gesture not essential to his part—for instance, if a twinge of neuralgia leads him to put his hand to his brow—he will often make the same gesture at the same point on the following night, without the recurrence of its cause; whereupon he immediately wonders why he did so, and recalls, by a distinct effort of thought, the sensation of the previous evening. In this case, what I have called the critical part of the actor's mind is evidently watching the executant part with great intentness. Another mode of consciousness which manifests itself in many actors may be called commercial rather than critical. 'I know people,' writes Mr. J. B. Howard, of Edinburgh, 'who, while on the stage, can count a well-filled house and sum up the cash almost to a fraction.' This faculty seems to be not uncommon.

I am indebted to Miss Wallis for two most interesting illustrations of dual activity of mind. In a large provincial town, one day, she was advertised to appear as Juliet. A few hours before the time of the performance, her little daughter was taken suddenly and seriously ill. She sent to the theatre to say that she could not possibly appear; but, the doctor assuring her that the child was in no immediate danger, she eventually determined, at whatever cost to herself, not to disappoint the public. Never, she says, did she enter more thoroughly into the part, and never did she play it with greater effect. She was strung up by excitement to a higher emotional pitch than she could ordinarily attain. And all the time the best part of her mind was with her child. Messengers were passing to and fro all evening

between her hotel and the theatre, and the bulletins, fortunately, were reassuring. She came out of the ordeal exhausted in body and mind, and would naturally be very loth to go through it again. Such an experience proves that two modes of intense activity may co-exist in the mind, each being, no doubt, resolvable into several subdivisions, if the memory could but reproduce them with sufficient distinctness. In the second case related by Miss Wallis a purely intellectual process of some complexity accompanied the performance of an exacting emotional scene. She was playing the title-part in Mr. Wills's *Ninon* at the Crystal Palace, where she had never appeared before. The moment she uttered her first speech she was conscious of a distracting echo in the theatre. If it were to continue she felt that she could scarcely get through her part, and she set to work to discover the right pitch of voice for this oddly-constructed building. She was somewhat consoled, before long, to find that the audience seemed unconscious of the reverberation, but she noticed that her fellow-actors were quite bewildered by it. Observing closely the effects produced by her comrades, and experimenting with her own voice, she at last hit on the right pitch, but not until the first act was nearly over. We have here a complex process of observation and reasoning running parallel with the playing of an arduous emotional scene. I should add that this was Miss Wallis's first appearance on the stage after a long period of rest, so that her performance of *Ninon*, so far from being automatic, must have involved a considerable effort of memory and attention. 'And a vivid emotional process,' Miss Wallis herself would add; but it is not essential to this part of my argument to determine whether the executant mode of mental activity, in any particular instance, is or is not informed by emotion.

The eleventh section of my interrogatory was designed to throw further light upon the subject of double consciousness. In reprinting it, I omit, from considerations of space, one or two questions as to the effect of unrehearsed incidents and trifling interruptions. The answers to these questions, though very entertaining, are of no great weight in one scale or the other:—

11. Diderot tells how Lekain, in a scene of violent emotion, saw an actress's diamond earring lying on the stage, and had presence of mind enough to kick it to the wing instead of treading on it. Can you relate any similar instances of presence of mind? And should you regard them as showing that the actor is personally unmoved by the situation in which he is figuring?

The anecdote of Lekain is regarded by the anti-emotionalists as a tower of strength; but its foundations are sadly insecure. Not that there is any reason to doubt the fact. On the contrary, similar incidents have come within the experience of every artist. It is Diderot's interpretation of the fact which is more than doubtful. Lekain as Ninias, he says, has just murdered his mother in his father's tomb. He comes upon the stage with blood-stained hands, horror-stricken, trembling, his hair standing on end; but seeing a valuable jewel lying on the boards, he pushes it towards the wing with his foot. 'And this actor feels?' cries Diderot triumphantly, 'Impossible!' Why impossible? It is by no means certain that the real Ninias, under the same circumstances, would tread under foot a jewel which happened to lie in his path. We all know how the most violent emotion is apt to render us keenly alive to trifles, and mechanically scrupulous in performing the pettiest acts of common life. The man who has determined to jump off Waterloo Bridge at midnight will wind up his watch as usual at eleven o'clock; and if he chance to see a sixpenny-piece on the pavement of Wellington Street, he will, in all probability, stoop and pick it up. Thus, so far as the incident of the diamond is concerned, Lekain might even have been labouring under the whole emotion of the real Ninias; much more may he have been experiencing the similar, though less poignant, emotional state—the agony *con sordino*—begotten by the imagination.

A few of the artists whom I have consulted—I may mention Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, and Mr. Clayton—hold that in certain crises of extreme emotional exaltation, an actor would be incapable of such presence of mind as that of Lekain. This, however, is a theoretical opinion rather than a statement founded on positive experience. I am informed of a score of instances in which jewels—even stage-jewels—have been adroitly rescued, but no one has related a single case in which the merest trinket has been sacrificed to the passion of the scene. My informants, moreover, are almost unanimous in holding that presence of mind in face of trifling misadventures by no means proves that the actor is personally unmoved. 'In a like case,' Mr. Forbes Robertson very aptly remarks, 'the second stratum of my mind would act for me without interfering with the first.' Mr. Beerbohm Tree takes precisely the view of the diamond anecdote which I have suggested above. He holds that Lekain's action may be just as rationally explained on the hypothesis of

extreme emotional tension as on that of perfect placidity. Mr. Tree, too, tells of an analogous case within his own experience, in which a young actress, of highly emotional temperament, exhibited even greater presence of mind. She was grovelling at the feet of a stony-hearted inquisitor, praying desperately for the life of some one dear to her, when a diamond fell from her hair. She noted where it lay, put her left hand to her brow for a moment, and then let it fall, as though in the lassitude of despair, precisely upon the stray jewel. The gesture was so appropriate that the audience suspected nothing, and the effect of the passage was, if anything, heightened. Yet there is not the smallest reason to suppose that this lady—a convinced emotionalist—was, on this occasion only, simulating in cold blood the violent emotion of the scene. 'I never lose my presence of mind,' writes Miss Bateman (Mrs. Crowe). 'I was once acting with a gentleman who played my lover, and in his death agonies his wig came off. Luckily I wore a long mantle, and was able to hide the mishap by throwing a corner of it over the gentleman's head. Dozens of such accidents have happened to me, and I don't remember once failing to meet the emergency.' An extreme case of adroitness under difficulties is related by an Anglo-American actor of great experience. He was playing a very stormy love-scene which ends in the lover pursuing the unwilling fair one in a sort of hare-and-hounds chase round and round the room. The lady wore a girdle of large and costly artificial pearls, and, just as this culminating point was reached, the string broke, scattering the pearls all over the stage. 'We finished the scene,' writes my informant, 'without any hesitation or any change of business, and neither of us crushed a single pearl. This shows that we had not lost our senses—that's all.' I should add that the hero of this dramatic egg-dance is, on the whole, an anti-emotionalist; but the incident is none the less a striking example of dual activity of mind.

The truth seems to be that the total absorption in one mode of feeling which numbs the intellect and deadens the sense is of very rare occurrence in real life, and still rarer, of course, on the stage. Yet total absorption, according to Diderot, is one of the inevitable results of that baneful 'sensibility' which characterises, or rather creates, the mediocre actor. If this were so, we should hear every day of some mediocre Othello strangling his Iago, or some second-rate Juliet stabbing herself in sad earnest. The Roman tragedian *Æsopus* is said to have given himself up so entirely to the frenzy of *Atreus* as to have slain a 'super' at one blow of his sceptre—a deed which more modern tragedians must

often have longed to imitate. The affair was probably a pure accident, like many other 'true tragedies' in the annals of the stage; or else it was a case of temporary insanity. Diderot, as in duty bound, declares Æsopus to have been but a middling actor. Two generations of Romans thought otherwise; but their judgment was no doubt biassed by the fact that they had seen him.

Before leaving this branch of my subject, let me illustrate by three anecdotes three different degrees of dramatic absorption. The first (related to me by an eye-witness) goes to show that some artists are apt on occasion to yield themselves up with painful completeness to the illusion of the scene. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean were one night playing *The Gamester* at Belfast. It was their benefit; the house was crowded, and the play went electrically. It closes with a piece of 'business' said to have been invented by Mrs. Siddons. After the death of Beverley, Jarvis and Charlotte attempt to lead Mrs. Beverley away; but she turns at the door, and as the curtain falls, flings herself in an agony of grief upon the body of her husband. On this particular evening Mrs. Kean had become so absorbed in her part that she could not shake off the illusion even when the play was over, and astonished the bystanders by vehemently shaking her husband as he lay on his pallet-bed, and crying piteously, 'Oh, Charley, tell me you're not dead! Say you're not dead!' 'No, no, my dear,' replied Kean a little testily, 'I'm all alive—I'm all right.' But even then a little time elapsed before the distracted widow could fully replace herself in the reality of things. My second illustration is more ambiguous. In the fifth act of *Othello*, while Emilia is knocking at the door, and the Moor, in anguish of soul, is half rueing the deed he has but half done, a celebrated tragedian is in the habit of seizing a moment when he is concealed from the audience by the curtain of Desdemona's bed, to drink a glass of water held in readiness for him by his servant! In some actors such a device might fairly be taken as a sign of callousness. The particular artist in question, however, is an uncompromising emotionalist in theory, and, as I have ample grounds for believing, in practice as well. The just conclusion to be drawn, it seems to me, is that the accomplished artist, even in the very tempest and whirlwind of passion, retains sufficient self-mastery to neglect no means of economising or reinforcing his physical resources. My third anecdote takes us to the opposite end of the scale, illustrating that sublime perfection of self-command which belongs to the actor of Diderot's ideal. Some years ago an old playgoer went to see a popular drama in which a very popular actor played an heroic

part. He noticed that the popular actor not only shouted very loud, but kept on changing his key in an eccentric fashion. Shortly afterwards he met one of the supernumeraries, whom he happened to know, and they fell to discussing the play. 'What did you think of Mr. So-and-So?' asked the super. 'Magnificent!' replied the old playgoer, diplomatically; 'but why does he shout in such different keys?' 'Oh, don't you know the reason of that, sir?' answered the super. 'That's to keep the men up to their work. When he changes his key it's to show that the limelight isn't on him!' If the *Paradoxe* were anything more than a paradox, this actor should be among the greatest of his age.

X.

The remaining sections are of small importance, and may be very briefly dismissed. Section 10 was forced upon me, so to speak, by a passage in Diderot:—

10. Does your personal feeling (such as love, hatred, respect, scorn) towards the actor or actress with whom you happen to be playing affect your performance? If so, in what way? Should you play Romeo better if you were in love with your Juliet, than if she were quite indifferent to you? And if you happened to dislike or despise her, how would that influence your acting?

The general tenor of the answers is precisely what I anticipated. Unlike the simple emotions of grief, joy, and terror, love and hate do not manifest themselves in characteristic and unmistakable external symptoms. They are emotional attitudes rather than individual emotions. Personal feelings of this sort, then, can but little help or hinder dramatic expression, any influence they may possibly possess being quite indirect. Most of my informants agree that an extreme dislike for any fellow-actor might, in spite of themselves, influence their playing for ill, whatever might be the supposed relation of their respective characters. One artist, however, pleads guilty to having entered with peculiar gusto into the nightly task of baffling and finally checkmating a fellow-artist of extremely unsympathetic private character; while, on the other hand, a well-known actor says, 'I never played Claude Melnotte better than to the Pauline of Miss So-and-so, whom I detested.' One or two actresses admit, theoretically, that they would feel constrained and ill at ease in playing Juliet to a Romeo who stood to them in a nearer relation than one of ordinary esteem and courtesy. But, with a few reservations and exceptions, the general answer to this question is that personal feeling towards a fellow-artist makes but little difference, while the fellow-artist's

talent and earnestness make all the difference in the world. I add earnestness, because talent, though the main thing, is not the whole secret. A bad actor, it is said, may sometimes be easy to play to, and a good actor difficult. I have been much struck by a remark of Miss Alma Murray's, to the effect that in playing to an actor who is languid and uninterested one is forced, in order to keep oneself up to the emotion of the scene, mentally to act the other part as well, of course at the cost of great exertion. Diderot's clockwork actor would certainly have the advantage of being exempt from this necessity.

The answers to Section 12, with reference to long runs, contain little that is novel, that subject having been frequently discussed in many quarters. I thought it necessary to suggest the point, because, according to the anti-emotional theory, long runs should be the very salvation of dramatic art. I find among my informants an almost unanimous agreement to the opposite effect. Some suffer more than others from the frequent repetition of a part; some are more alive than others to the element of novelty afforded by the changing audiences; some have a greater tendency than others to keep on working at and developing a part, studying new refinements and attempting improved effects; but all agree that there is a limit even to these alleviations of the evil, and that ultimately they either deteriorate or have to make a very painful effort to keep up to the mark. No one who has ever seen a play after its fiftieth night will have any doubt on this point.

A tendency to rely on momentary impulse is one of the protean forms of 'sensibility' discussed in the *Paradoxe*. The value of 'inspiration,' too, is one of the chief points at issue between Mr. Irving and M. Coquelin. Therefore I formulated the following questions:—

14. Do you ever yield to sudden inspirations of accent or gesture occurring in the moment of performance? And are you able to note, and subsequently reproduce, such inspirations? Have you ever produced a happy effect by pure chance or by mistake, and then incorporated it permanently in your performance?

The answers are not without interest, though the principle of the thing is really so self-evident that the discussion cannot have any great importance. In any adequately rehearsed performance momentary impulse must clearly be restrained within narrow limits. Any wide departure from pre-arranged positions and 'business' will put the whole mechanism out of gear. A few actors of genius have been known to take surprising liberties in this respect, which their supporters must needs learn to anticipate

and allow for. Salvini is a case in point; Robson (as I learn on the authority of his widow) was another. As a rule, however—leaving out of consideration the gagging and clowning of low comedians—it is only in details of intonation and gesture that momentary impulse can possibly be admitted. Almost all my informants allow that within due limits they readily avail themselves of inspiration, and most condemn as false in principle the too rigorous sameness, even down to the movement of a particular finger at a particular word, which a few actors laboriously cultivate. The rule, I take it, is ‘Do not trust to inspiration, but do not banish it.’ Many very happy effects have certainly been suggested by the spirit of the scene and produced on the spur of the moment—perhaps never to be reproduced. ‘The late Mrs. Charles Kean told me,’ writes Mr. Frank Harvey, ‘that while playing at the Princess’s Theatre she once made a great sensation in a moment of nervous excitement, and afterwards could not even remember what she had done, far less reproduce it.’ ‘I have often,’ writes Mrs. Bancroft, ‘been inspired to introduce on the spur of the moment a new gesture or a new reading of certain lines. . . . The voice must be guided by the feelings and love of the subject. Emotion has a wide range, and the heart can produce many notes. These I play upon as the fit seizes me.’ Mr. Hermann Vezin, both in theory and in practice, leaves a wide margin for variation in gesture. One gesture, he says, is true to your way of feeling the situation on one night, another on another. He condemns, for instance, the three solemn taps on the brow with which Charles Kean always preluded the line, ‘In my mind’s eye, Horatio;’ and he relates some curious examples of Frédéric Lemaitre’s variability in this respect. Mr. Beerbohm Tree, at the commencement of his career, used to force himself always to make a given gesture at a given word, but was taught by experience to regard the practice as useless and embarrassing. Mr. Clayton relates an amusing, yet really valuable, instance of inspiration. Salome, in *Dandy Dick*, has just read from the *Times* the paragraph announcing the Dean’s munificent offer of 1,000*l.* to the Minster Restoration Fund ‘on condition that seven other donors come forward, each with the like sum.’ ‘And will they?’ cries Sheba eagerly; whereupon the Dean, who has been standing with his back to the audience, turns with an unctuous yet sickly smile, and replies, ‘My darling—times are bad, but one never knows.’ This smile was an inspiration. For some time after the production of the play Mr. Clayton used to speak the line gravely and meditatively,

without producing any effect. One evening the smile—a really admirable trait—came to his lips almost before he knew what he was doing. The audience rose to it immediately, and from that day forward the speech, thus accentuated, remained one of the most successful in the piece. On the whole, then, there is every reason to believe that, within due limits, momentary impulse plays an important and legitimate part upon the stage. But there is still less reason to doubt that the actor who ‘trusts to inspiration’ in the sense of going on the stage unprepared and uncertain of his own intentions, deserves the very hardest things that MM. Diderot and Coquelin can say of him. I may pick up a five-pound note in the street to-morrow; but I should be a fool to leave my purse at home on the chance.

The answers to Section 15 (‘Do you act with greater satisfaction to yourself in characters which are consonant with your own nature than in characters which are dissonant and perhaps antipathetic?’) are of no importance. It seems to me, I confess, that in taking the trouble to argue that a hypocrite would probably make a bad Tartuffe, and a miser a bad Harpagon, Diderot insults the intelligence of his interlocutor—the submissive ‘Second’ of his dialogue. What has this to do with sensibility? Hypocrisy and avarice are not emotions, like grief or fear, nor even emotional attitudes, like love or hatred. They are simply non-emotional habits of mind, like selfishness, or laziness, or candour. We might as well demonstrate that an irresolute man would not necessarily make a good Hamlet, and that one need not be a murderer to play Macbeth.

To the last two sets of questions I have received some interesting answers, but the points suggested are not strictly germane to the present discussion.

XI.

I shall not attempt formally to sum up the results of my inquiry. To do so would involve much repetition, and would require more space than I have at command. Let me rather state briefly what I believe to be the origin and the solution of the whole controversy.

Throughout this argument I have had an uneasy sensation of playing the living dog to the dead lion, and treating the great name of Diderot with scant respect. Nothing could be further from my purpose. Mr. Birrell has remarked very happily that ‘if Macaulay were to come to life again, a good many of us would be more careful than we are how we write about him.’ If Diderot were to come to life again I should submit these pages to him

without too much trepidation. He might demolish my argument; he would certainly find out its weak points; but I believe he would also modify his own position. Indeed if Diderot could take cognisance of sublunary things, he would probably be a little annoyed to see the *Paradoxe*, in its present shape, figuring as one of his most famous works, and very much amused to find it regarded by some actors and many critics as the gospel of acting. At the very beginning of the dialogue the First Speaker confesses that 'he has not yet arranged his ideas logically'; and in truth nothing can be more evident. If Diderot had been satisfied with his argument he would surely himself have given it to the press, instead of leaving it to be exhumed nearly fifty years after his death. Did he himself believe in it? Yes, as one believes in a paradox. He had put forward the very opposite view in a letter to Mlle. Jodin a few years earlier, assuring her that 'sur la scène et dans le monde, celui qui montre plus qu'il ne sent fait rire au lieu de toucher.' There is no reason to doubt, however, that he believed his thesis to present one aspect of the truth. But I think it is evident to any one reading the dialogue carefully that Diderot's design in making these jottings was not so much to state a new truth about acting as to satirise a particular form of literature. Diderot was a naturalist born out of due time. He foresaw the modern drama and he believed in it, though his own attempts to realise it were not encouraging. When we find him, then, as in the *Paradoxe*, assuming throughout that the personages of the stage must necessarily be 'magnified and non-natural men,' can we help suspecting him of laughing in his sleeve at the conventions of French tragedy? Yet that is the groundwork of his whole contention, so far as it can be reduced to any sort of unity. Agamemnon and Orestes, Cleopatra and Agrippina, according to his own illustration, are like the ghosts which children manufacture with the aid of a sheet, a broomstick, and a gruff voice. These spectres neither move, speak, nor think like men; why should they weep like men? That is the gist of the argument, and so far it is logical enough; though it is not quite clear that a certain thrill of real emotion might not help the actor to rise to the 'magnified and non-natural' emotion of his personage. But supposing this thesis absolutely right, what does it amount to? Not a fundamental principle of art, but a commentary (not to say a satire) upon French tragedy. And no one, I think, knew this better than Diderot. Had he seen, instead of foreseeing, the modern stage—nay, had he been familiar with the Shakespearean

drama—he would have been the first to admit that his theory expressed only a corner of the truth.

Why, then, has it met with such wide acceptance? Partly because of our inborn love of paradox for its own sake, partly because it happened to chime with the idiosyncrasy of a certain number of actors. No one doubts that there have been actors, and great actors, who possessed small susceptibility to imagined emotion. I am not aware that this has been proved with regard to any of the very greatest actors on record, though according to Diderot it should have been the one essential characteristic of all of them. It is certain, however, that astonishing feats of what I may call mechanical mimetics have been and can be performed. No less is it certain that mere nature, unaided and uncontrolled by art, will not carry an actor very far, or rather will carry him a great deal too far. This is the double-barrelled argument of the anti-emotionalists, and it has done them good service. But it does not touch the heart of the matter. Nature has so compounded us that the imagination of certain mental states tends to beget in us the physical conditions and symptoms appropriate to these states. It may even be said that many people, and certainly many actors, whose personal emotions are not easily stirred, respond with peculiar sensitiveness to the touch of imagined emotion. Furthermore, nature has endowed us with a manifold mechanism of mind which enables us to mould and control imagined emotion to artistic ends. It seems probable on the face of it, then, that the artist who avails himself of this tendency of the imagination and this faculty of the intellect, follows the line of least resistance, and will (other things being equal) produce his effects with greater ease and certainty than the artist who insists on keeping his imagination dormant in the moment of action, and relying entirely on his memory and his muscles. This antecedent probability is amply confirmed, as it seems to me, by an immense preponderance of testimony, old and new, from the greatest, as well as from lesser, artists. Irreconcilable paradoxists, too proud to believe what is probable, have shown ingenuity worthy of a better cause in explaining this evidence away. As a rule, however, anti-emotionalist logic has been very much of the kind exemplified in the following passage from one of Samuel Rogers's diaries:—"Mr. Merry asked if Mrs. Siddons felt on the stage. I said she had assured me she did. Dr. Moore: "It is impossible. Good acting requires cool judgment and a clear memory. It is not acting your own part, but another's." The whole *Paradoxe* is foreshadowed in this one fallacy.

WILLIAM ARCHER.

Night.

—οὐρανόνθεν δ' ἄρ' ὑπερράγη ἄσπετος αἰθήρ.

Iliad, viii. 554.

WHEN the sweet breath that fills
 The heart of Sunset o'er the west is rolled,
 And dissipates the imperishable hills
 To haziness of gold :

When Titan Night anew
 Heaves o'er the globe her starry-linked chain
 From lonely Sirius in the Southern blue
 Round to the frozen Wain :

Then the vivacious air
 Is filled with sprites ; beneath its dusky stole
 Far spaces through the opening hemisphere
 Flush crimson with a soul.

Magnificently rise
 Anthems of constellations ; near and far
 Awake and sleep the sweet antiphonies
 That call from star to star.

The comet-hair of dreams
 Flows in their rushing-by with emerald light :
 The faint air following fans our head, and seems
 As kisses of the night.

And he whose spirit gives
Communion with them, pulses through the whole
Of Heaven in vaguest passioning and lives
The home-life of the soul.

He lives in all he views :

His ghost with rapturous wings ascends the dim ;
The infinite of beauty doth infuse
The infinite in him.

Till from Night's dusky shores

The waves break backward, when the morn is grey,
And a new crimson o'er the plain restores
The darkness of the day.

E. W. LUMMIS.

Dulcie.

A PHILOSOPHER'S FANCY.

From Malcolm Frazer, Esq., to Miss Frazer.

Saltlinn-by-Sea, August 24, 1880.

YOU ask for a 'real, long, diary-like letter,' little sister, as if an old professor like me could waste time in such a feminine pursuit as keeping a diary, or inscribing gossipy letters to my friends. But you, spoilt Mabel, are not to be denied. My moral courage quails before thoughts of the effect contradiction might have upon your autocratic nature, for I have long ago learnt that the greatest tyranny may be found in little women with fair hair and blue eyes like your own.

You commiserate me on the dull monotony of my sea-side retreat, but I repudiate your pity. Dull it may be, monotonous it unquestionably is. But when I require variety there is the changeful sea to look at, whilst for amusement I have the pleasure of studying the characters of my fellow-lodgers, and of watching a little play between three *dramatis personæ* which I prophesy will end in the ringing of wedding-bells.

The principal actors are a young man who rejoices in the poetical name of Aubrey St. Quintin, and calls himself, I believe, a poet, and a little girl with blue eyes, and nothing that distinguishes her from the rest of the world. She is here quite by herself, and seems to have no one to look after her. She is rather white and quiet, and wears a shabby little brown frock, which, if I were the poet, I should like to replace by something bright and pretty.

They—the poet and the girl—sit together at meal-time, walk together by the sea, read books together, and speak to each other with their eyes. I think he patronises and she adores; whichever way it is they seem very happy in each other.

The other actor is, at present, playing the part of mere walking lady, but I foresee that her talents will speedily raise her into *prima donna*, and if I were the girl with the eyes, I should fear for the poet. She is a young widow, Mrs. Charleton, and we have already made acquaintance over the constant passing and repassing of the salt-cellar at dinner. She is very smart, very bright, very beautiful. If I were not an old bachelor my pulses might flutter when she looks at me with the eyes and voice of a Circe; as it is, I only fear for the poet. She must be out of her element

here, and she treats most of the inmates of the primitive little hotel with a silent contempt, if you can call a complete ignoring of their presence contempt. Out of sheer longing to speak with some one she addressed me to-day at luncheon, and asked me if I did not find Saltlinn very dull.

‘So dull,’ she added, sweeping away (metaphorically speaking) the rest of the company with a scornful glance from her dark eyes, ‘that I shall not put up with it long. My sister who meant to come with me is ill. It is only because I hate solitude that I come to the *table d’hôte*. It amuses me to study my fellow-creatures.’

‘And you find these interesting?’ I asked.

‘Interesting?—no. Unless it be those two young things,’ she added, nodding in the direction of the poet and the girl. They were talking in low voices together, but at that moment the young man looked up and met Mrs. Charleton’s eyes. It struck me that he coloured a little, and after that his gaze kept wandering back to her.

She too observed it, for presently she turned to me with a significant little laugh.

‘He is composing a sonnet to you,’ I suggested.

‘No; they are vowed to his Cinderella. Poor dingy little Cinderella.’

‘Yet Cinderella came out of the cinders a star,’ I answered, feeling somehow impelled to take up the cudgels for the little girl. ‘What is she doing here all by herself—a child like that? Do you know her?’

‘Oh yes, we are very good friends. She is a dear little girl. Her name is Dulcie—Dulcie Meade—and she is a governess or something of that sort. She has been ill, and has come here during her holidays to pick up her strength. She must be very poor, for even now she gives daily lessons to some people near here. She and the poet walk to their house every morning, and when her three hours’ teaching is over he fetches her back. She is a good little thing. She often comes and sits with me when I am dull. I must get her to introduce me to her poet.’ With that, she looked again at Aubrey St. Quintin, with a half-smile on her lips, and I wished more than ever—for Dulcie’s sake—that her poet would give her a new frock.

I am not a lady’s man, and I took it for a sign that Mrs. Charleton was very hard up for companionship when she invited me to come to her sitting-room that evening after dinner.

‘We might have a little music,’ she said, ‘or whist, if you prefer it. Dulcie Meade always comes, and I have set my heart

on getting introduced to her poet, that I may ask him too. You and I—with a smile that almost made me forget my forty years—‘as two elderly people can sit and do gooseberry to the young ones’ love-making. But seriously I am all in favour of it. She is too soft and gentle to grow into a poor soured governess, and the poet is—looks charming.’

‘He is good-looking,’ I agreed, ‘but how about the poetry?’

‘I don’t know,’ she said.

But I fancy she *will* know, very shortly.

Well, having brushed myself up, and rather regretting my quiet evening pipe and box of new books, I presented myself in Mrs. Charleton’s sitting-room that evening after dinner. She was sitting at the piano, and beckoned to me to join her. Aubrey St. Quintin and Dulcie Meade were on the balcony, looking very happy, and carrying on an unceasing flow of conversation in undertones.

Mrs. Charleton is very charming, very clever, with the great art of adapting herself to other people. She did not laugh at me for being a sleepy old professor—as you do, impertinent Mabel—nor inundate me with professional shop; but entered into a thoroughly intelligent conversation, showing genuine intellectual capabilities far above the average. I was very near forgetting that, as a rule, young widows do not care to talk philosophy with men old enough to be their fathers, and I might be there now, discussing the free-will controversy, had not Mrs. Charleton struck a few chords on the piano, which recalled me to myself.

‘What kind of music do you like, Mr. Frazer?’ she asked. ‘Your native ballads? I always think they lose all their charm, unless sung by a Scotchwoman. Nevertheless, I will do my best for you.’

Her ‘best’ was very good, and I had no criticism to make. As she sang the constant dialogue on the balcony ceased, and the poet was attracted to the window to look at the singer. After one or two songs she turned to him with a winning smile, telling him that as I had had my turn, it was now for him to choose what she should sing next. The young fellow flushed with pleasure at being taken notice of by so great a lady, and was at her side in a moment, leaning on the piano, and telling her that he did not care *what* she sang so long as she sang something.

He is a nice-looking boy, singlehearted and honest, I should say, in spite of his poetical propensities, and with one of those faces women always fall in love with—dark-haired and dark-eyed, with a devotional manner to all the fair sex, old or young.

‘Perhaps you sing yourself? I am sure you do,’ said Mrs. Charleton, smiling back into his admiring eyes. ‘Will you?’

'Oh, not I. I can't sing a note,' he answered; 'I wish I could.'

'But then you can write poetry, and that is even better.'

'Verse—not poetry,' he said, in quick disclaimer that seemed to me to be sincere—not the orthodox sham humility; 'I wish that wretched volume had never been published; it haunts me wherever I go. Please do not allude to it again.'

'But you ought to be proud of it. I know some of the poems by heart,' she said kindly; 'I have even ventured to set one of them to music. "A Little Maid," you know. It is my favourite.'

He would be superhuman not to have felt flattered, not only by the words, but by the subtle charms a clever woman can exhibit in voice and manner, and when she sang his own poetry to him in a clear, sweet contralto, his subjugation was completed. I began to feel *de trop*, and wondered what the little girl thought of it all—poor insignificant Cinderella.

When I joined her she was sitting on the balcony, looking into the room at Mrs. Charleton and her poet. She gave me a shy little smile when I sat by her side, and then her eyes flew back to the piano.

She is not so like all the rest of the world as I thought; she would be very pretty if she were not so white and thin, and so dingily dressed. She has a nice little nose and mouth, and a smile like a cherub; I am sure, if I were the poet, I should be in love with her too, and never tire of kissing her baby lips. As for her great, childlike blue eyes—well, well, I see I shall soon have to take to writing novels if I go on at this rate. It is only out of pity for you, in the solitude scarlet-fever has banished you to, that I allow my pen to meander on in this old-maidish fashion.

Dulcie did not speak to me for some minutes, but sat gazing at Mrs. Charleton with adoration written all over her face. Then suddenly she turned to me and said in a soft little voice—

'Isn't she beautiful?'

'Very,' I said. 'Is she as good as she is beautiful?'

'Oh yes; quite. I never knew any one so kind and good and clever. She can do everything. Her name is Ruby. Does not it suit her? She is just like a rich flashing ruby.'

Evidently my little friend has the bump of veneration largely developed. I hope her admiration is not misplaced, and that Aubrey St. Quintin does not share it too much.

'Don't you sing yourself, Miss Meade?' I asked.

'Oh no—I can't do anything. I am stupid,' she said, quite simply.

'But you play? Come, you cannot deny that, because I know you go every day to teach the little Faringdon children.'

'It is very easy to teach small children.'

'I beg your pardon—not at all. It is a great art; it wants a patience, a tact that some people can never learn. It must be very tiring for you. You look as if you ought to do nothing but be petted and waited on all day.'

'It is no use minding being tired,' she said rather sadly, but laughed directly afterwards; adding, 'And I like teaching sometimes. The idea of me being waited on—dear me, I should hate it. I have always had to wait on other people.'

'Poor little thing,' I said compassionately.

Like all elderly bachelors I have a weakness for little girls like Dulcie, and I began to take quite a fatherly interest in her.

'Oh, I don't mind,' she answered brightly; 'I am very happy. Every one is so kind: Mrs. Charleton—and Mr. St. Quintin.'

'The poet? I must read his book before I can judge him fairly.'

'He is the cleverest man I ever met,' she said, with a tender pride that must have bewitched Aubrey St. Quintin could he have heard her; 'and his poems are lovely. I have got them—I will lend them to you if you like.'

Altogether, by the end of the evening we had become excellent friends. It will interest me, whilst I am here, to watch the progress these young people make in their courtship. If I can trust my eyes, they are already engaged *sub rosa*, and think each other perfection.

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Malcolm Frazer, Esq., to Miss Frazer.

September 5.

So you are interested in my character sketches, are you? But, indiscreet Mabel, you have nearly forfeited all confidences by your vile insinuations concerning 'lovely young widows' and 'the vanity inherent in soft-hearted old bachelors.' Never jump to hasty conclusions, for you may overleap facts and alight on the unreliable soil of fancy, as in this case. Know, inquisitive little sister, that I am impervious to all the poisoned shafts that ever were loosed upon man by woman. I have found my mistress, and no time can be called lost that is spent in pursuit of her. You will argue that it is waste of time to chase what can never be overtaken, and that knowledge for ever flees those that pursue her. True, O sapient one! But you overlook the roses that are gathered as we follow in her fleeting footsteps, and no arguments from your impatient pen will ever make me swerve from my allegiance.

I am invulnerable to the siren's charm; but not so, I imagine, the poet. Instead of looking in the face of his little girl-love, he gazes with the unabashed effrontery of adoring youth at the brilliant beauty of our fine lady, Mrs. Charleton. If

she guesses what is going on, it is unkind of her not to spare him. But I believe the admiration is partly mutual, and that our flashing ruby does not disdain the worship of so interesting a subject as Aubrey St. Quintin.

And what of Cinderella?

Good little Cinderella—why, she is innocence itself—goes into rapturous praises of Mrs. Charleton to the poet, into rapturous praises of the poet to Mrs. Charleton.

You will wonder what place I can find in this trio? I confess that I am like a dusty old folio among elegant modern *éditions de luxe*, and that I serve the purpose of mere utility. I make the fourth wheel to the coach, and prevent that inconvenient number which is said to be mere trumpery. I made a remark to this effect the other day, and feel morally certain that Dulcie, in whom I take such a fatherly interest, had the want of feeling to murmur ‘frumpery’—which was not nice of her, when I come chiefly for her sake.

To tell the truth, I am beginning to feel sorry for her, and try to occupy her attention, that she should not think herself neglected when Aubrey worships at Beauty’s shrine. Not that she has any jealous qualms yet.

Probably, he himself has no idea that he is in the least degree swerving from his affection for her; and as for disappointing her . . . bah! I should have to shake him. The little girl is worth a dozen of her captivating friend—patroness—whichever position it is she occupies.

I like Dulcie because she is so simple and honest in her love for these other two. When she gave me the volume of ‘Songs and Ballads’ by Aubrey St. Quintin, she looked as proudly at the little book as a mother at her first-born.

‘Isn’t he clever?’ she said, lifting up her eager, shy eyes to read my answer in my face, when I returned it. ‘It is not every one who could write like that.’

I was glad to be able to answer sincerely that I considered the poems above the average, and that the poet, though not destined to be a Milton (of course I omitted the last parenthetical comment in speaking to Dulcie), had a good deal of fancy and sentiment.

‘No wonder he wrote well, with such a subject,’ I could not help adding—it is the especial privilege of elderly bachelors to make speeches like this to nice little girls, and I did not mean it as flattery.

By this time Dulcie and I have assumed a kind of fatherly and daughterly relationship to each other, and it seems to be a

pleasure to her to come to me with little semi-confidences, or to beg for my opinion and advice on the tiny interests of her life. She blushed a little at my remark, and looked conscious—then said, with childlike ingenuity :

‘We did not know each other then.’

‘So you are not old friends. How long have you known each other?’

‘Oh, I remember. I came here the end of July, and I met him for the first time on a Sunday—just three weeks and two days ago, coming home from church. . . I beg your pardon. It is very wrong of me to come and interrupt you with my silly talk when you are busy.’

I was reading on the sea-shore, where she had joined me. The other two were at a little distance . . . shrimping.

‘I, like you, am on a holiday,’ I answered. ‘My book can keep, and I would rather hear about yourself. Are you quite alone in the world, Miss Dulcie?’

‘Yes, now. I am only nineteen,’ she said, stroking out a crease in the dingy brown frock. And I have no home, no friends—no one but myself to work for.’

She did not speak complainingly, but in a dull matter-of-fact way that touched me. I can see what she wants, well enough, poor forlorn little creature. I suppose Aubrey St. Quintin will give it to her; anyhow he ought to. If not, and if it were possible, I should almost like to adopt her as my daughter and see what *I* can do to bring some colour into her cheeks, and merri-ment into her eyes, by giving her new frocks and feminine trifles. Pshaw! what can this be but my dotage coming on? Nevertheless, when she left me, I laid aside my book and spectacles, and calculated that if I had married at twenty, and become a father at twenty-one, I might have a little girl just Dulcie’s age. Still, I am glad I have not. How she would disturb the clearness of my thoughts when I am engaged in some abstruse calculation, and how all my bachelor comforts would be destroyed! . . . I suppose it is thinking of you, Mabel, that makes me so prosy, so I warn you that this is the last letter you receive from me for a long time. Perhaps, if the fortunes of Dulcie and Aubrey become at all complicated I shall commit the folly of inscribing them in my diary for your future edification. Marry her he must; wretched fellow to hesitate! even if I have to play go-between to bring him to the point. I cannot have my Dulcie made unhappy.

Malcolm Frazer's 'Folly'—his 'Diurnal' Book.

September 8.

I know, now, why I have taken such a fancy to Dulcie. It is because she reminds me of the little girl who gave me a lock of soft brown hair (I have it still, somewhere or other) when I first went to Oxford. She had eyes like Dulcie, and I think I kissed her that day when she gave me the hair. In fact I know I did. How well I remember it—a brook studded with yellow marigolds, and weeping willows growing on the margin. No one could see us under the willows, so I kissed her, and said I should never forget her, and she whispered, 'Oh, come back soon from Oxford, Malcolm.' Perhaps I used to think I was in love with her. But I was only nineteen, and at that time thought more of taking honours than of matrimony. And when I came back the little girl was gone. Not very far—only as far as the churchyard. Poor little girl; and I have a lock of her hair still.

I will not say that that is why I never married. But I used to think I would wait until I found another little girl just like that one, and somehow I never found one until I met Dulcie—and, of course, now, it is too late. He is a lucky fellow, that poet of hers.

To-day I met Dulcie coming back from the Faringdons alone. Every other day Aubrey has fetched her home, but to-day Mrs. Charleton invited him to go out sea-fishing with her, and, as he told Dulcie, 'he did not know how to refuse.'

You see they are not engaged, so there is no earthly reason why he should dance attendance on Dulcie. But there are tacit understandings that are as binding as promises, and I can guess what he is feeling. He is a nice boy, and I don't think he would like to act dishonourably or unkindly to any one. But what chance is there for a young man when a beautiful woman falls in love with him? He is bound to give in sooner or later.

Dulcie still worships her friend Ruby, and trusts her poet. But sometimes her eyes are rather doleful, and I catch her watching Aubrey wistfully, as if all was not quite right. She and I are better friends than ever, and she has as good as confided in me about herself and Aubrey.

Yesterday she said, 'If only I had a father like you, who could advise me how to act. I am so ignorant. Sometimes everything seems a puzzle.'

So I told her she might treat me as her father, and that I wished she was my daughter. So I do.

When I met her to-day we chose a sunny spot on the cliff,

and sat there; I with a book from which I was taking notes for a lecture I am to give on my return to London, she with a well-thumbed, ink-stained school lexicon, over which she had spent many slow hours drumming its contents into stubborn little heads. Her eyes were fixed on a small sailing-boat out at sea, where the widow and the poet were pretending to fish.

‘Is this what you are teaching them?’ I asked, pointing to her book; ‘I suppose you know every word by heart.’

‘Oh yes. I am sick of it,’ she said, pushing it impatiently from her. ‘Sometimes I am so tired, so tired of it all. I cannot help it.’

‘Poor child,’ I said, and could not resist laying my hand over her little shabbily-gloved one.

‘It is different for us women,’ she went on. ‘A man has so many things to hope for—fame, or success of some sort. But we can do nothing. We have only to go on with the same dull work day after day, day after day, with nothing to look forward to all one’s life long. It is dreadful always to be alone.’

‘I have always been alone too. Now that I am old and grizzly I am used to it, and am as happy as a grig. Perhaps you will be too.’

‘Ah, yes—perhaps—when I am old,’ she answered, making me feel at least double my proper age. ‘Besides, you are very clever, and a man. It must be nice for you because you are learned, and people come for miles to hear you speak, and you have written books.’

‘On the other hand, you are young and have your life before you. You will marry and be very happy. Take the advice of an old bachelor, and don’t worry your little head over present troubles. There is a great deal in being young. Besides, don’t tell me you have nothing to look forward to.’

As I said the last words I glanced towards the fishing-boat, and she blushed and smiled.

‘But then, I am so stupid, so dull and uninteresting,’ she whispered. ‘And when people are very clever——’

‘When “people” are very clever they see true worth in any guise,’ I interrupted; ‘I am sure you don’t need to be told that by me.’

‘No,’ she said; then, irrelevantly, though I could follow her train of thought, ‘he is so good,’ she added softly. ‘Too good for me.’

‘He does not think so.’

‘It ought to be some one brilliant and clever, like Mrs. Charleton,’ she said. ‘If I were a man I should fall in love with her at first sight; I know I should.’

‘But men do not always care for “brilliant and clever” women,’

I answered. 'All the women I have most liked and respected have been gentle creatures who find their life work in loving; women like you, Miss Dulcie.'

'Were you ever . . .' she began quickly, then checked herself.

'Was I ever in love? Scores of times, after a fashion. Really in love—never. When I was nineteen I was nearest to it; boys will be like that, you know. But we never met again,—so here I am.'

'Did she die?' asked Dulcie, with sympathetic eyes. 'Yes? Oh, I am so sorry.'

'Remember, I was not in love,' I hastened to explain, wondering why I had raked up that old story for Dulcie's ears; 'only on the verge of it.'

'Oh yes, I understand,' she said.

So she did, of course. These young people always do understand anything to do with love. You have only to tell them the first word and they know the rest of the story.

I see a good deal now of Dulcie. She is by no means so stupid as she imagines. She has read a good deal, and thinks over what she has read, which is the true way of acquiring knowledge. We were talking the other day about art, and so fell into a discussion of what is vaguely called 'the Beautiful,' and since then Dulcie has been going through parts of Plato's Dialogues with me. She is an intelligent pupil, and we both enjoy the lessons. I suppose I am wasting my time; but when one meets a dear little fellow-mortal, whose pleasures in life are few and far between, what can one do but try and add to their number?

Decidedly I cannot leave Saltlinn before the play is played out. I have a shrewd suspicion that I myself have become an actor in it, taking the part of general confidant, benefactor, and peacemaker, while Mrs. Charleton, as I prophesied, has become *prima donna* in the place of Dulcie.

September 12.

Every evening we meet—a *partiee carré*, as Mrs. Charleton calls it—in the widow's sitting-room. Sometimes we talk on the balcony, or play a quiet rubber of whist (this last amusement being got up especially for me, I believe), but oftenest Mrs. Charleton sings to us, whilst I smoke my pipe and try to turn a deaf ear to Dulcie and Aubrey's *sottovoce* conversation. Now and then Aubrey cannot tear himself from the piano, on which occasions I have to take possession of Dulcie, and try to prevent her from looking towards her lover. It is just as well she should not notice certain glances that pass between him and Mrs. Charleton. But though 'love is blind' they say, love is very

keen-sighted when it is stirred by jealousy, and I am afraid Dulcie notices something. Once or twice she has answered me quite crossly when I endeavour to distract her attention. I suppose she thinks me a prosy old bore.

This reminds me that the shabbiness of Dulcie's frock is not to be compared with that of my own costume. Bachelors fall into very slipshod habits, and my coat has grown as shiny as ebony, whilst it also occurs to me—looking at Aubrey St. Quintin's irreproachable neatness—that my shirts are relics of a bygone generation.

Yesterday evening Mrs. Charleton positively *sang* the poet away from Dulcie when he was sitting by her near the balcony window. As Dulcie uttered her little confidences to him I saw Aubrey's passionate eyes fixing more and more intently on the singer's face. She was in great beauty, and sparkling with vivacity and graciousness. He tried to fight against the attraction, poor boy,—I could see that,—and was torn first this way, then that; his honour bidding him stay by Dulcie, love calling him to Mrs. Charleton. Of course love won the day—when does it not?—and presently he rose impatiently, leant his elbows on the piano, and sighed half angrily. She looked up at him and smiled . . . God help him now, and Dulcie!

What miseries these young folks go through in their love affairs. It is all 'vanity and vexation of spirit,' and some day they will laugh at the recollection of bygone frenzies. But they are bitter whilst they last, and I am so soft-hearted and foolish that I pity them, and would give my right hand to help them.

When Aubrey and Mrs. Charleton looked thus at each other, tearing out each other's secret by the very strength of their love glances, I went closer to Dulcie, and began to fear that Cinderella's prince was going to prove a defaulter after all.

Poor Dulcie; she looked very forlorn and deserted, and tears were dropping quietly on to her folded hands. It was no use my saying anything, so I only made some trivial remark about the moon, and patted her on the shoulder as a sort of vague encouragement.

'Thank you,' she said, and gave me a sad kind of smile which I cannot forget.

I think I must warn that boy of what he is doing, lest he break the girl's heart for the sake of what is only glamour. Nonsense! As if hearts ever broke in this prosaic age. Still they may get bruised, and bruises take the bloom off hearts as much as off the ripeness of a peach or grape.

Ah, here he comes, looking as if he has a confession to make,

or wished to ask for advice which I know he will not follow if I give it to him.

He says he is a miserable wretch, a vile beast, a weak-minded ass, and various other unpleasant things too numerous to be recalled.

I let him abuse himself until he was tired and paused to be contradicted. Finding that no contradiction was forthcoming, he sobered down, and explained his troubles.

In the first place, he *has* been in love with Dulcie; now he *is* in love with Mrs. Charleton.

‘I daresay she is making a fool of me,’ he said; ‘I can’t help it—there is no one like her. What ought I to do? I have never spoken of marriage to Dulcie, but you know the sort of position we are in. I feel as much bound as if we had been engaged in the sight of all the world, and I don’t want to hurt her. She is so lonely and desolate—any one ought to be proud to make her a bit happier. On my honour, when I think of it, I am almost in love with her too! and yet—no! there is no one like the other—there never can be any one like her to me.’

‘Then there is not much for me to say,’ I answered. ‘Only don’t keep the child in suspense. This is hardly an ordinary case. Her helplessness and loneliness entitle her to a double share of tender consideration. But I do not advise you either way. Heaven defend me from meddling with other people’s love affairs! Having kept out of them myself, how can you expect me to be an authority?’

The poet heaved a sigh like an earthquake, and he spoke no more to Mrs. Charleton that day, which caused gloom in one quarter. If she loves him (as I believe she does) there is no hope for him, and Dulcie will be a governess till the end of her days.

What can I do to help her? Buy her a new bonnet, or gewgaw of some sort? They say women are easily comforted by trifles, and I know Dulcie has a weakness for pretty things. How her eyes gleam when Mrs. Charleton gives her a ribbon, or a pair of gloves, or any little vanity that she thinks will please the child. Mrs. Charleton is kind to her after a patronising fashion, and Dulcie dances attendance on her like a devoted little spaniel, running messages for her, and making herself useful in every possible manner.

September 15.

We have had quite an excitement here to-day, an incident perfectly in keeping with the third act of a drama, and I fear the

dénouement of our little play is close at hand. I say 'fear' because it has been an interest to me here, and relieved the monotony of a somewhat lonely existence. I am fond of all the *dramatis personæ*, and they, I think, of me. But they have played havoc with my work, and, siren-like, reduced me to a state of indolence positively distressing in a respectable philosopher of my age and experience.

This afternoon I went out with my book tucked under my arm, intending to read on the beach. Had I been strong-minded I should have stayed indoors, safe from all possible interruption; but I happened to look out of the window whence I could see the foamy sea enticing me out, and I succumbed like any schoolboy. Then I met Dulcie 'wandering disconsolate' by the 'sad sea-waves,' like *Cenone* mourning that scamp Paris; and what could I do but attempt to restore a few smiles to her poor little face?

'Where are the others?' I asked; 'not boating on such a rough day?'

'Yes, Mrs. Charleton loves a stormy sea, so they went. I am such a bad sailor that it was no use my going; I should only have been in their way.' It was no use contradicting so self-evident a truism, so I contented myself with saying that I was glad for my own sake that she had not gone.

'I have only got three more days,' she said; 'then back to my London pupils. I must not grumble, for I have had a long holiday and it has been very pleasant. Yet sometimes,' and her eyes went out to sea, where a little boat was tossing on the waves in a way that made me feel quite unwell even to look at, 'sometimes I half wish I had never come. It makes it so much harder to go back.'

'You poor little thing,' I exclaimed quite indignantly; 'you shan't go back to your drudgery.'

'Who can prevent it?' she said, shaking her head and smiling at me.

'Who?' I cried, unthinkingly; 'the poet!'

'Oh, don't,' she whispered, covering her face with her hands. That is all over.'

'You must not think that; I don't believe it. Is it that widow, my dear? I am not afraid of her. It is a little glamour, and his heart is yours all the time; you see if it is not. Come, don't fret about it.'

'They are so well suited. I don't blame either of them,' she said, looking straight at me with her brave blue eyes; 'and if it is so, I would not for the world be in their way. It wouldn't hurt me; I ought never to have thought of such a thing.'

'It would hurt you,' I said soothingly, 'and I will let nothing hurt you. It will all come right if you are patient. You love him, and I believe in true love getting the best of everything.'

'Oh, it is not only that,' cried the poor little girl, bursting into tears. 'It is that I have no one to love me, and I am so lonely, so terribly lonely.'

I let her have her cry out, and pretended to read. I am in such a rage with Aubrey, that I should like to shake him out of his clothes and duck him in the sea. How dare he play with Dulcie's heart in this cruel way?

When I looked up again, I saw the boat coming to land just in front of us.

'I don't see how they can land here in these horrid big waves,' said Dulcie, who had dried her eyes by this time. 'I am sure they will go over. Oh, look, Mr. Frazer! Isn't it dangerous? Do tell them to go back.'

But my caution came too late. For, as I called to Aubrey to take care what he was about, a wave caught the boat broadside, and hurled it towards land, precipitating Mrs. Charleton and Aubrey into the water.

There was no danger, but the sudden wetting was enough to frighten a woman into hysterics or a fainting fit, and as I rushed to their assistance I prepared myself for a scene, having but a poor opinion of the female presence of mind.

Dulcie had not even cried out, but she flew before me, up to her knees in the water, holding out her loving little hands to her lover.

But he did not notice her. He was carrying Mrs. Charleton in his arms, and looking passionately into her white face.

'What is the matter?' I asked, as he laid her on the sand. 'Fainted?'

'I don't know,' he said, thoroughly frightened; 'I never saw any one faint.'

Probably she had received a blow on the head and was stunned; I expected nothing worse. But to the two young ones who had never before seen the deathly aspect of unconsciousness, there was something terrible in her cold, silent stillness.

Dulcie knelt by her, rubbing her hands, and Aubrey stood by, gazing miserably on the beautiful, quiet face, with its closed eyes, and long lashes lying black on the soft, white cheeks.

'My darling! I have killed her,' he murmured wildly; 'my darling.'

Dulcie sprang up, leaving go of the hands she had been chafing. 'Killed! nonsense,' she said, with a hard mirthless laugh. 'It is

only a faint. I will run and get some brandy, and order her bed to be got ready.'

'Yes, do that; she will be all right directly,' I said. 'You are right, Dulcie. Run on, and I will carry her home.'

Our conjectures were correct. Mrs. Charleton presently came to, and declared herself none the worse for the accident, except for a bad headache.

The only person who had come off badly was Dulcie, who roamed about the beach all the evening, looking very dull and lonely.

I guessed that she was repeating over and over to herself the endearments her lover had used for Mrs. Charleton.

Aubrey has been talking to me for at least two hours, and would be talking still if I had not sent him to bed. He is in a regular lover's 'Inferno,' and does not know what he means or wants, or anything else, except that he is in love with Mrs. Charleton, and that he ought to be in love with Dulcie.

'What am I to do?' he kept on repeating; 'I won't be dishonourable if I can help it. She—Mrs. Charleton I mean—says I ought to propose to Dulcie. So I will. But I don't suppose she cares for me any longer. How can she? If she does have me I'll be good to her, on my honour I will. I am not such a selfish devil as to go and wreck her life because I made a mistake myself.'

'All right; then for goodness' sake do propose to her, and don't make a fuss over it,' I said rather irritably, for I was getting sleepy, and felt cross with the fellow, for Dulcie's sake. 'If she does have you, you are a lucky dog, and you have my congratulations. Don't make a martyr of yourself.'

'Not I; at least not to her. She *is* a duck,' he said, and I think he meant it.

Who would not call Dulcie a duck?

September 16: Morning.

The poet has done it; proposed, I mean; and has just come to tell me of it. But she has snubbed him, and given a most decided 'No.' Brave, true, unselfish little Dulcie! As if I did not know what it has cost you.

Yet I believe there is a little element of contempt for the poet in her straightforward heart. I hope so. It will help her to get over it the quicker, and, to tell the truth, I think she would soon have been disillusionised if she had married Aubrey.

Well! it is over, this play which I have been watching, or rather acting in.

To-morrow Dulcie goes back to lessons, and detestable little boys and girls, who will make her grow old and faded before she is thirty. The Fates order it so, and none may alter their decree.

I wish I could help her. How can I? If she had married Aubrey I would have left my paltry fortune to their son and heir, and so have done her good in that way.

What can I do for her? Would it insult her if I gave her a new frock and hat, I wonder? Surely not, coming from an old boy like me. Yet that won't do her much good. Nothing will help her, unless I adopt her, and I am not so old as all that. People would want me to marry her next.

Marry Dulcie? Well, why not? Would she have me? She says what she wants is some one to love her, and I can promise to do that. I would make her life one long holiday, and give her pretty things to her heart's content.

Forty years old; it is not such a great age after all. Others have waited till then, why not I? If I have got rusty and old-fashioned, Dulcie would brush me up, and I would be her slave. No fear of *my* running after lovely widows and naughty sirens with eyes like Mrs. Charleton.

What shall I do? I am like the poet, with his eternal 'What shall I do?'

I know what I will do,—I will go and see what Dulcie is about; if she is very unhappy I will try and comfort her—and perhaps. . .

September 16: Evening.

I went to the public sitting-room that no one uses in the morning but Dulcie, and opened the door quietly.

There she was, my little girl, standing by the window in her shabby brown frock, looking so lonely that my heart began to ache for her.

Her child-face was downcast, her blue eyes hidden by the long lashes that curled on the soft-tinted cheeks.

When I came in she looked up at me with a pitiful little smile; sad, imploring, deprecating, shy, all at once. I could find nothing to say to comfort her. I felt tongue-tied, as confused as any foolish boy.

So we stood silently looking at each other for a moment; then my love and pity overcame me. I don't care, if you laugh at me. I could not help loving and pitying Dulcie, and at that moment there seemed to be no doubt as to what I ought to do.

'Dulcie,' I said, and held out both my arms towards her.

K. CARMARTHEN.

Is Climate changing?

AFTER every exceptional season, or even after any unusually long period of either rainfall or drought, the remark is made generally that climates are changing, and at once a plentiful crop of newspaper letters springs up. The change is invariably for the worse; no one ever experienced such weather in the days of their youth, &c. &c.

It may, therefore, interest some of our readers to show how little is really known of the alterations of the physical conditions of the earth, about which people talk so glibly. We are not now speaking of the changes of climate at various geological epochs, but of those which are alleged to have occurred within historic times, and of which evidence is adduced. The carelessness with which assertions as to the conditions of climate in these islands a few centuries back are made is well exemplified by the following statement contained in a German work of great authority on forest meteorology. The author, Professor Ebermayer, for many years superintendent of the Government Forest School at Aschaffenburg in Bavaria, says, 'In Ireland and Scotland, where the great woods, from which whole districts received their names, have disappeared, nevertheless the supply of water has not diminished.' With reference to this we can safely say that no information exists as to the rainfall of these islands even at the time of the Commonwealth, much less during the Roman occupation, when the district about Manchester was dense forest. No one, therefore, can possibly know if the rainfall has increased or fallen off within the last thousand years.

Such a statement as the foregoing is only to be paralleled by another, also relating to Manchester, the district we have just cited. The authors of a work on popular meteorology, a work 'couronnée' by a foreign academy of high repute, state, 'It is at least admitted that in the city of Manchester, since the multiplication of factories, hardly a day passes without rain.'

Now, in Manchester, the average number of days on which rain is recorded is about 190, a figure which corresponds closely with those for many other parts of England to which manufactures have not yet penetrated, and where factory chimneys are unknown.

All such positive statements break down when submitted to the inexorable test of numerical records, as we shall see further on. Writers are far too prone to forget that meteorological instru-

ments were not invented before the middle of the seventeenth century, so that no precise statements as to meteorological conditions in bygone ages can ever be tested statistically. Indirect evidence is all that we can cite, and conclusions derived from it are always more or less doubtful.

The extraordinary cold of the month of May last year, which was noticed throughout the whole of Western Europe, has induced a well-known French scientific writer, Capt. F. Zurcher of Toulon, the joint author with M. Margollé of numerous very useful works on popular science, to address to 'La Nature,' in August last, a communication on the alleged secular variation of the seasons. He refers to a theory of Jean Reynaud, promulgated some thirty or forty years ago, which is based on the supposed existence in the earth, considered as a planet, of two orders of seasons; one depending on the inclination of the plane of the equator to that of the earth's orbit, the other on the excentricity of that orbit itself. He applied the term *solstitial* to the former, and *heliacal* to the latter order of phenomena.

If the solstitial summer coincides with the heliacal winter the seasons should be remarkably moderate, the winter mild and the summer cool; if the opposite conditions prevail, and the heliacal and solstitial summers coincide, the seasons should be as extreme as possible.

According to Reynaud's calculations the year A.D. 1122 was the last period of the first-named conjuncture, and consequently of exceptionally moderate seasons. As regards the actual facts of the weather of that year, Mr. E. J. Lowe, writing in his well-known little work, 'Natural Phenomena and Chronology of the Seasons,' says absolutely nothing. His only entry to that date is a quotation from the Saxon Annals, a notice of an earthquake in the west of England.

In Sir W. Wilde's account of the Census of Ireland, 1851, which contains a chronicle of all the epidemics of that country from the earliest ages, we read for the year 1122,—

'This year was the greatest dearth of all in England;' 'and in 1123 the frost killed the trees in England; fishes in ponds killed; great plague over man and beast; terrible was the famine in England; in May trees scarce budded.' The authority Sir W. Wilde cites is Dr. Short's 'A General Chronological History of the Air, Seasons, Meteors, &c.,' 2 vols., London, 1749.

We see, therefore, that such evidence as we can procure goes to prove that 1122 was not an exceptionally mild year, and that the winter of 1123 was unusually severe.

There is one point to which Reynaud directed special attention, as furnishing incontestable evidence of the supposed deterioration of the climate of the earth in later times. This is the alleged extension of arctic ice along the east coast of Greenland. The whole of this reasoning is based on the interpretation of certain old Icelandic stories as to the discovery of Greenland. The broad features of these stories are that ships from Iceland sighted a fertile land to the westward, and called it Greenland. Now, in a very interesting article in the 'Cornhill' for 1872, entitled 'Legends of Old America,' we find that Rafn, in his 'Antiquitates Americanæ,' quoting from one of these old MSS., states that a ship sailing up Baffin's Bay sighted land to the westward. Next year she sailed on an exploring expedition, and followed that coast until eventually she reached a place where the men landed, and found grapes growing wild and self-sown corn. It is thought probable by the best authorities that these explorers reached the St. Lawrence.

Again, Adam of Bremen, a writer of the eleventh century, states that he had heard from King Sweyn the Second of Denmark that his sailors had sailed west till they reached a land where grapes and corn grew wild.

We know from the Orphic fragments relating to the voyage of 'Argo,' which are, however, attributed to Onomacritus, but, though forgeries, date many centuries before Adam of Bremen, that adventurous explorers did, at that early age, reach high latitudes. Not only do we read of their coming to regions where the sun never set, and at other seasons never rose—the story evidently conveying that they had crossed the Arctic Circle, doubtless on the coast of Norway—but also there are distinct accounts of the ships being worked along the coast in the lanes of open water between the ice and the land.

Now we come to something more tangible, a story which is told in the *Meddelelsen om Grönland* (Communications about Greenland). In the tenth century one Gunbiörn, an Icelandic, was driven by a gale in sight of Greenland, and brought back news of its existence. Then, about A.D. 983, Erik the Red was sentenced to three years' banishment for murder committed in Iceland. In that year he sailed, and for three summers cruised along the coast of Greenland, eventually heading an expedition to colonise the country. The colonists were subsequently converted to Christianity, and built numerous churches, of which many ruins remain to this day.

As to the end of these colonies, none of which exist as such at the present time, the stories vary, one account states that they

died of the Black Death; another says that they were massacred by the Skraelings, the legendary cannibal tribes of the interior; while the third and most probable story attributes their end to a descent of North Sea freebooters.

The interest about all this lies in the fact that all these settlements were said to be in East Greenland, in a fiord called Eriksfiord, and this East Greenland was supposed to lie opposite Iceland, on the eastern side of Cape Farewell. If, then, this idea were true, and the colonists had landed on that coast, it would be self-evident that conditions must have grown materially worse since the tenth century, inasmuch as the real east coast of Greenland, opposite Iceland, is admittedly quite inaccessible by water at the present time.

The real state of the case is that all the ruins which have been found are to the westward of Cape Farewell, some way up Davis Straits, and are mostly situated in Julianshaab district, to the north of Lichtenau. In fact, the fiord called Igalikofiord is supposed to be Eriksfiord, this latter name being unknown in Greenland at present; and it has even been attempted to identify some ruins of the head of that fiord as Brattahlid, Erik's own settlement. The division of the colony into East and West Greenland is misleading, as the territories might with better reason be called North and South Greenland, both lying to the west of Cape Farewell, and the district called West being situated farther up Davis Straits. The western side of Greenland is quite accessible every season.

No evidence has yet been adduced to show that any part of the true east coast of Greenland was ever inhabited by any but Greenlanders, of whose huts certainly traces are to be found.

So much, then, for evidence of intercourse in the Middle Ages with the true east coast of Greenland.

But there is direct evidence that the ice-limit between Greenland and Iceland has not materially changed its position within recent, at least within the last one hundred, years. In the years 1786 and 1787 Capt. Löwenörn and Lieut. Egede were sent on an expedition to investigate this very question of the accessibility of East Greenland, and we know from their charts that the edge of the ice was, if anything, rather further south in 1787 than it was found in 1869 by Capt. Hegemann of the 'Hansa,' who drifted the whole way along it in the summer of that year, or in 1879 by Lieut. Holm. We may, therefore, dismiss this idea of Reynaud's as to the increase of Arctic ice as not deserving of much thought.

Another idea is that, as we know that formerly wine was made in England, the change of climate must be the principal reason

that this manufacture does not now flourish. There are, however, many reasons why British wine does not command a market at present. At the best it must have been sorry stuff; of late years increased trade and facilities of commercial communication have brought more generous liquids within the reach of the consumer. We still, in occasional summers, read in the newspapers letters saying that wine has been made from grapes ripened in the open air in England, but we have never yet heard that any one liked to drink the product.

As regards the actual change of mean temperature, we possess at least for Vienna and Paris records extending back for more than a century. The change of temperature which these show is very slight indeed, not extending to much more than a degree or so; an amount which can easily be accounted for by differences in the actual instruments or in the mode of taking the observations.

As regards London a recent paper by Mr. H. S. Eaton, 'On the Mean Temperature of Greenwich from 1811 to 1856,' contains the following figures for four eleven-year periods:—

Period	Mean temperature	Period	Mean temperature
1812-1822 . . .	48.95	1834-1844 . . .	48.84
1823-1833 . . .	49.55	1845-1855 . . .	49.25

Here there is no evidence of a regular decrease of temperature.

Accordingly we must consider that the fact of any serious deterioration of our climate, as regards the mean temperature, is not established. It may, however, be alleged that the change does not manifest itself in a lowering of the mean temperature, but in a more frequent recurrence of exceptionally cold seasons.

Now, as regards this point, Dr. W. Köppen of Hamburg has set himself to ascertain if any periodicity is discoverable in the recurrence of characteristic weather. He selected exceptionally severe winters, as being phenomena certain to be recorded, owing to the widespread severe distress which their occurrence was certain to entail. The final outcome of his papers 'On Protracted Periods of Weather' is the following:—

'The main feature of the entire investigation has been to prove that for certain intervals strongly marked periodical influences make their appearance and then vanish entirely, at times being replaced by others of a totally different character. No law has, as yet, been discovered for these changes, and so the outcome of the inquiry is, on the whole, negative.'

It is self-evident that if there had existed any general tendency towards a lower temperature, indications of such a serious change must have come out in the course of Dr. Köppen's research, which extended back to the year 462 of our era.

As regards our own climate here in London, we know that severe winters have certainly not been experienced more frequently than usual of late years. Within the last ten years we have had three severe winters, which have been described in the 'Journal of the Royal Meteorological Society' in successive papers by Mr. W. Marriott and Mr. Charles Harding. The former of these gentlemen gives (vol. vii. p. 146) a table showing the mean temperature of London in January for each year since 1774. From this it appears that the temperature of that month in 1881 was 31.6° , and that the only years in which the January mean temperature had been below the freezing-point were six in number—1879, 31.9° ; 1838, 30.5° ; 1814, 28.5° ; 1795, 25.5° ; 1780, 30.2° ; and 1776, 28.6° . Here at least there is no evidence of progressive deterioration of climate, and January may be said to be a fair test month for the quality of a winter.

Mr. Harding gives (vol. xii. p. 235) a table showing the total number of days of continuous frost at Greenwich during the whole winter for forty-two years, from 1845 to 1886. In the winter of 1885-86 there were twenty-eight such days (from February 19 to March 18). The instances of intervals exceeding twenty days were—1879-80, twenty-two days; 1878-79, twenty-one days; 1857-58, twenty-four days; and 1854-55, twenty-one days. Here, again, there is no evidence of progressive increase in the duration of frost.

As far, therefore, as the records of temperature go we can only conclude that M. Reynaud's thesis is not proved, and that any deterioration of our climate is quite inappreciable.

Let us now take another element. As regards the rainfall it is constantly stated that infallible periodicities have been discovered, but the more carefully the records are studied the more certainly are all such statements discredited.

In Symons's 'British Rainfall' for 1886 a plate will be found giving the average fall over the United Kingdom for the last 160 years from 1726 to 1886, which affords ample material for testing any of these theories.

In the first instance, during the period from 1880 to 1883, it was constantly remarked that the climate of England had become so wet that it was useless to cultivate cereals, and that all land should be laid down in grass. In fact, in 1883 we had the last of a series of nine successive wet years—of years in which the fall had been above the average. Such a series of wet years had never before been experienced during the entire period of 160 years shown in Mr. Symons's plate.

If, however, we examine the record we see that during the thirteen years 1738-50, conditions the exact opposite to the foregoing had prevailed—the fall was markedly below the average. Such a persistent drought as this has never been since on record. The drought was in reality more prolonged than the above statement would show, for if we except the single year 1751, which was wet, the drought lasted for a quarter of a century, from 1738 to 1762.

We can easily imagine investigators about the year 1760 announcing that the proverbial dampness of the British climate had disappeared, and for ever! Such ideas would, however, be rudely upset by the figure for the year 1763, which was considerably higher than the average, and this year was succeeded five years later by another much wetter year.

Such a period of drought as has been mentioned has never since recurred. It will therefore be seen that we have the two extremes of long-continued drought and long-continued wet weather occurring at an interval of about 140 years from each other, and each set in without the slightest apparent indication of its approach.

Announcements are repeatedly made that wet years follow each other at intervals of ten, eleven, or twelve years. As regards the twelve-year period, it is said that the years in this century of which the numbers are multiples of twelve are wet. This statement is supported by the years 1824, 1836, 1848, 1860, and 1872; but not by the years 1800, 1812, and 1884. Accordingly the rule is not to be trusted implicitly. In the last century it failed signally, for only two of the series, 1728 and 1776, were wet; while 1740, 1752, and 1788 were dry, and the fall for 1764 was exactly the average amount.

Let us now examine the ten-year period. It is often asserted that years of which the number ends in four are dry. This is apparently reasonably correct for the present century, for 1824 is the only wet year coming under the category. In the last century the rule did not hold quite so true, for the years 1734, 1774, and 1794 were all wet.

All such alleged periodicities, however, throw no light on the question of whether the rainfall of the British Isles is decreasing or the contrary, and it is hopeless to look for evidence before the year 1726, with which Mr. Symons's carefully compiled diagram commences.

It will therefore appear that, whether we look to temperature or to rainfall, the finding on the whole inquiry as to whether climate is changing or not is most decidedly 'not proven.'

ROBERT H. SCOTT.

Uncle Pierce.

BY CHARLES BLATHERWICK.

CHAPTER IV.

'DANNINGS ARE DANGEROUS.'

BY way of passing the time until the London steamer sailed, I went with a chance acquaintance to a concert in the big opera house.

A good-looking, agreeable fellow was this Mons. Marin; spoke English fluently, smoked remarkably fragrant cigarettes, and was there at Bordeaux, he told me, to look after the vintage.

He knew the town well and took an extraordinary interest in my search for the Harleighs.

In spite of his civility there was a touch of the Paul Pry about him, and so palpably did he pump me about my dash from Dresden, and the rubbishing bits of china and curios I had picked up on my way, that I showed him a little bit of the true Briton's cold shoulder.

He was mighty inquisitive about the route I had taken. Why had I stopped at Neufchatel and then hurried on so quickly into Italy? What could I want with such a pack of nicknackerie?

All this made me fight shy of him, but he was so full of this concert and the new singer that I promised to go with him.

A poor affair it was.

I was lolling back in my chair wondering why one did not get better music in such a splendid house when the first notes of the new singer caught my ear. A common enough song. What contralto has not sung Gluck's 'Che farò'? but who ever sang it as this one was singing it? The utter sadness of it! The wail of the 'Respon-di'!

I kept my eyes closed, lest a vision of 'fair, fat, and forty-three' should disturb the impression, when the song ceased.

I looked up, nerving myself to be disillusionised, when, lo and behold! there was a Spanish-looking girl calmly receiving the applause with all the self-possession of a woman twice her age.

A tall girl, with a swarthy complexion, lustrous eyes, and a high forehead, surmounted with an abundance of jet-black hair.

I could not take my eyes off her. She was certainly not beautiful, but courage and sorrow were so plainly writ on the pale face that your attention was chained at once.

I was impatient till she sang again, and then, to the bewilderment of my neighbours, I fairly jumped out of my seat.

She was singing old Maisie's song! I could not believe my ears. I shook myself to know if I was dreaming. No—there it was word for word.

*Oh Waly, Waly! on the land,
Oh Waly on the sea,
And cursed be the kinsman's hand
That tore my love from me.*

The rich round tones and slight foreign accent gave a terrible pathos to the doggerel words. I was dumbfounded, and stared after her so long and absently when she left, that at last Marin (who had never once taken his eyes off me) tapped me on the shoulder, and we shuffled out.

'Now you know why I wanted you to go to this concert, Mr. Dent,' he said, when we got clear of the house. 'Miss Danning is singing under her mother's name, "Diaz." But it would be best in future not to show quite so much public interest in our friends.'

'I don't happen to know the Dannings,' I said coldly, 'but I know the song.'

'I know them, Mr. Dent. They are my best friends. I have heard the song before. I cautioned her not to sing it. It is indiscreet—dangerous.'

'I don't quite see that.'

'Ah! You know English better than I. What does it mean?'

'It means nothing. It is a lament.'

'A lament means something. This one curses the hand of the oppressor. The Vaillé Vaillé is the word. The Pascarole to the friends of the cause. I understand, Mr. Dent. You may trust me.'

'Utter nonsense, M. Marin. It is a queer old Scotch ballad—nothing else.'

'Dangerous,' he rejoined, shaking his head; 'and you as a friend —'

'— I never saw Miss Danning before,' I interrupted; 'but I am interested in her family.'

'You must, indeed, have been interested, to chase them all the way from Dresden.'

'You have got hold of the wrong end of the stick, M. Marin. I followed friends I knew. Different name altogether.'

'Pah! Captain Pierce has many names. We know that.'

I had half a mind to resent this. I don't believe he meant to be impertinent, though; he was too much in earnest for that. A close friend of the Dannings, too; the very man to tell me all I wanted to know. He looked as if he might be trusted. I would try him.

'Pierce Danning is an uncle of mine,' I said. 'I have never seen him, but I should like to hear about him. It is a shame to go indoors this fine night. Let us walk along the quay and smoke a cigar. Is it true that he is under the surveillance of the police?'

'Who is not, Mr. Dent? I respect your uncle. He is bold, intrepid, a fine fellow; but he is needy, and the green cloth takes a long, long purse. Like you, he dabbles in pots, pans, and curios. He has a pretty taste that way. Makes money by it in the morning, and loses it at baccarat tournant in the evening. Then come the police. Ever the police, Mr. Dent! They call him contrabandier. They say, "Your merchandise is a blind. These grand jars and golden goblets hold dynamite. Your cases are full of secret correspondence. You are an Anarchist."

'Then your uncle snaps his fingers. He laughs at the gendarmerie. Ah! he can laugh, your brave uncle. I like a merry heart, but I like a true one better; one that beats for Liberty. Such a one has Pierce Danning, and such a one have many of your oppressed countrymen.'

'We call ourselves free, M. Marin,' I laughed.

'Free by laws, but slaves by custom,' he rejoined. 'You sleep, you English, and dream you are free; then you wake up and sing the Paspapole. Mr. Dent, you can trust me. You went to Neufchatel, you say. You saw M. l'Editeur of *La Solidarité*; what said he?'

'I'm ashamed to say I never heard of *La Solidarité*, nor of the editor,' I replied.

'But you have read his last utterances about wealth?'

'No.'

'You have a treat in store, then. "Wealth," he says, "is a storage of the blood and sinews of our fellow-countrymen." A dangerous storage, Mr. Dent. Bad as dynamite!'

'Don't mistake me for a Socialist, M. Marin,' I said, with a laugh.

'You are cautious, Mr. Dent, but that is your national failing. I tell you, you may trust me.'

'I believe that, M. Marin, or I should not have asked you about Captain Pierce.'

But as I grew shy about his pet theories so he grew shy about the Dannings.

It was with the greatest difficulty I learned that this was Miss Carrie's first appearance. That she had travelled all the way from Italy to join the concert troupe, and was now stopping with them at the Hôtel du Nantes. Not a word could I get out of him about her father. No; he was not at the Hôtel du Nantes. He was somewhere in the neighbourhood, but he didn't know where. He was moving about, and it would be well for me not to seek him. 'In fact, Mr. Dent,' he said, throwing away the end of his cigar as we reached the hotel door, 'I should advise you, under the circumstances, not to seek either of them just now. It is a critical time, and you may have heard that *Dannings are dangerous*. You may have heard *this*, though you have never heard of *La Solidarité*. It may be that this is not a wise step of Miss Danning's, but she can take care of herself, and, moreover, there are some who watch over her safety very closely.'

'I shall certainly go and see her to-morrow, M. Marin.'

He shot a keen glance at me, and we parted without another word.

I woke with a bad headache, and 'Waly, Waly!' ringing in my ears.

No doubt if I had acted with due caution and according to all traditions of the family, I should have put the Bay of Biscay between me and my erratic uncle with all possible speed; but the pale face and the wonderful voice had taken such unaccountable hold of me, that I started off to the Hôtel du Nantes immediately I had swallowed my breakfast. I had promised Lettie to help the Dannings if I could, and here was my chance. Apart from this pledge, though, I believe I should have gone. Some irresistible force drew me, and I set off down the Quay wondering what a Danning would say to a Dent.

Early as I was, Marin was before me. There he was lounging at the hotel door smoking his cigarette. I passed in with a nod, and inquired for Madame Diaz.

She was out; but, not to be done by M. Marin, I wrote a short note to Captain Pierce telling him I should like to make his acquaintance, and left it there on the chance of his calling.

This done, I went back and waited the result.

Marin had his eye on me. My sitting-room commanded the front entrance, and there my friend stuck all the morning consuming endless cigarettes. Then came a parley. Some one inquired for me, and before I could get to the door Uncle Pierce stood before me.

A wiry, dark-complexioned man, rather below the average height, compact, spruce, and active.

There was a nervous movement about him. His restless eyes required a frown now and then to keep them fixed, and his closely-cropped beard only partially hid the sharp twitchings of his mouth. He talked quickly—talked well too, in a pleasant rippling way. About the last man you would take for an Anarchist.

My note had reached him by the merest accident. He was not staying at the Hôtel du Nantes. That was the 'Cage of the Singing Birds,' and Carrie had her perch there with the rest. He had called to see how she was getting on, found my note, and came on to answer it in person. We chatted without the least constraint, laughed at the family grudge and Mrs. Dent Fraser's peculiarities, and were soon on capital terms.

'No, I haven't written to old Harleigh,' he said, 'because Carrie wanted to keep the singing business secret. Yes; she has a glorious voice. Gets it from her mother, and it will bring grist to the family mill, I hope. You want to see her, eh? Natural enough. Not now, though. This *début* upsets everything. She must keep quiet; she lays too much stress on the family squabble, too. So you've turned doctor! Just for the fun of the thing, I suppose. That's how I began life. Humdrum sort of work. Didn't suit me. I like freedom, Henry Dent, freedom!'

He rattled on incessantly, and it was only when he was fairly spent that I got a chance of saying that I must certainly see Cariña and Mrs. Danning before I left.

'Impossible, Henry! Impossible!' he cried, jumping up and pacing the room. 'We are all at sixes and sevens. This visit of mine is just between ourselves, you understand. The beginning of a new friendship. The rest will follow. We are all hugger-mugger.'

'But what would the Harleighs say if I told them I left without seeing Cariña?'

'Ah, well! You'll see us by-and-by at Broxford, maybe. We shall be there as soon as we have refeathered our nest. Hallo, what's this?'

'Only some odds and ends I picked up as I came. Never mind them. Perhaps if I saw Cariña——'

'Family failings!' he cried. 'Family failings—doctoring and collecting—what do they portend? All very well for an old buffer like me, but why on earth should you, with all the world before you, dabble in these things?'

'Man must chase something.'

'Let him get on the right trail, then,' he rejoined quickly. 'Now this is a common bit of Urbino imitation. Mind you! I know about these things. You should see my pack! It would open your eyes. I've given my mind to it and had some fun for my money. Now, let us see what you've got. Ah! just as I thought. Two or three bits of good old Dresden—the rest rubbish!'

A sudden thought struck me. Why shouldn't Cariña be ea ched through this rubbish?

'You see, Uncle Pierce,' I said quickly, 'I want educating.'

He looked at me, jerking his mouth curiously.

'Why not?' he asked. 'Why not have the real thing instead of sham? I daresay I could put you up to a bargain or two, but what would Mrs. Dent Fraser say? A Dent and Danning bargaining? Bargaining! Swindling, she would call it! It would never do!'

'Never mind about Mrs. Dent Fraser. This is between ourselves. Let me come and see your things.'

He jumped up and began his nervous tramp again, muttering to himself. Then suddenly—

'Could you come *now*? at once?'

'Certainly,' I replied with alacrity.

'Wait a bit. Supposing I were to tell you that your uncle was a suspect, would that stop you?'

'No.'

'Come on, then. Nothing like striking when the iron's hot. We shall find a voiture outside.'

He was down almost before I could get my hat—hailed a carriage, bundled in, and directed the driver to the Jardin Publique. Dismissing him there he led me at full trot down two or three narrow half-built streets, dodging through scaffolding poles, jostling blue-bloused carriers of bricks and mortar, and stopped at a small unfinished villa, made a little more pretentious than the rest by a garden plot in front. With a hasty look back he skipped up the steps two at a time, opened the door with a key and motioned me to enter.

'One moment while I prepare Mrs. Danning for your visit,' he said—then slipped inside the sitting-room, leaving me in the dimly lighted passage, hot and dusty with the run. The door was ajar, and I could hear from the loudly whispered conversation between him and his wife that my visit was not altogether agreeable.

As their voices grew louder my attention was suddenly attracted to the hazy form of a figure that came between me and the light on the other side of the glass door at the end of the passage.

I could make out the outline of a large fat flabby face glued against the glass, and a pair of black beady eyes. These eyes, however, eyed me so persistently and so viciously that I was glad when Uncle Pierce's voice called me into the room.

Mrs. Danning rose from the sofa when her husband presented me, and after a word or two of welcome fell back with invalid languor. Unmistakably Cariña's mother. She lay back watching us with half-closed eyes, now and then interjecting some warning in Spanish as her husband became too voluble.

No Carrie! not a trace of her; not even a bit of music. We should meet by-and-by, her father said; in the meantime I could look at his collection. There were cases in the corner of the room, and one or two loose specimens on the table.

'This is the sort of thing you should go in for,' he said, putting an elaborate ivory carving into my hand. 'One of the oldest arts in the world; your Bible tells you that. Nothing like ivory to repay the workman's finish. Only a bit of the head of a crozier, but see how lovingly the material has answered the workman's touch. Look at the scroll-work on this Milanese dagger. Talk of colour, too. What d'ye say to these enamels? Persian! This bit of red and green is priceless; your majolica is dirt to it. Those cases are full of first-rate stuff, and now's your time if you want a bargain.'

So we got to bartering. He wanted my money, and I wanted to see Cariña.

He pressed his bargains to get rid of me, and I haggled over them to prolong the visit, Mrs. Danning getting more and more fidgety as the chaffering proceeded.

'This lot,' he cried, 'cost me two-fifty. . Give me a cheque for two hundred and it is yours. It is a chance you won't get again.'

'Seas prudente,' came warningly from the sofa.

'My wife is quite an invalid, you see,' he whispered apologetically; 'these specimens, I give you my word, can't be matched, Dirt cheap! and——'

Hereupon Mrs. Danning rose slowly from the sofa, came softly across the room, and laid her hand on his shoulder.

'Cariña would not like this,' she said, still in Spanish.

'Nonsense!' he replied. 'I must attend to my business.'

'Remember who he is.'

'Don't concern yourself about trifles, Nina mia!'

She turned back to the sofa with a sigh, and was about to reply, when I interposed by telling them I knew Spanish.

He laughed merrily.

'These women! These women!' he cried. 'The same everywhere. Regular misers! You would have thought, now, that my wife and Carrie were sick and tired of these things. Not a bit of it. They won't part with a cracked saucer if they can help it. Shall it be two hundred? What d'ye say? Wait and see what Carrie says? My dear boy, that would never do. You'd never get 'em at all. Well! well! to mark our first meeting, let us say one-fifty. Shake hands with Mrs. Danning now; for I am sorry to say we are expecting a visitor. I'll send the things to your hotel,' he added, when we got out into the passage again, 'and you can send the cheque back.'

'Who is that?' I asked, pointing to the glass door, where the same black beady eyes were glaring at me.

'Only old Paul,' he replied. 'Paul! come here.'

A short, thick-set man shuffled through the door as he spoke, as ugly an old chap as you'd meet in a day's march, and one that looked as if he would be an uncommonly tough customer at close quarters.

'This is Mr. Dent, Paul,' said his master. 'You'll have to take some things to the Hôtel du Paris for him presently, and bring back a cheque. You'll know him?'

'No fear about that,' he replied, darting a look at me.

'Good-bye, Henry! Good-bye! Sorry to hurry you away.'

'One word, Uncle Pierce,' I said, as he opened the door for me. 'I have a particular desire to see Cariña. You will manage this for me, if I send you the cheque?'

'Oh, that's it, is it?' he replied with a laugh. 'Aha! All right, Henry. You shall see your cousin;' and with this he half pushed me out on to the doorstep, and there left me, not knowing which way to turn. My coming had been too hurried to take any bearings, and before I had gone ten yards I was utterly lost in a labyrinth of bricks and mortar.

A friendly labourer put me on the main road, and as I turned to thank him, lo! there in the distance was my Communistic

friend, Marin. His back was towards me, and he was unconcernedly lighting his cigarette, by which, I suppose, I was to infer he had not seen me. Luckily the next turn brought me in front of the cemetery gates, and in there I turned to get rid of him.

I had suddenly jumped into a lively little adventure. Here was my shady uncle playing hide-and-seek at Bordeaux, his daughter turned public singer, and M. Marin watching them like a detective. I put him down at once as Cariña's lover, and, no doubt, he put me down as an emissary from *La Solidarité*, sent on some secret mission that might be hurtful to his friends.

A dozen M. Marins should not hinder me from making Carrie's acquaintance, though. Her pale face haunted me. She was under a cloud. She was sacrificing herself to a gambling father. She had no mother able to look after her. No one but this mysterious Communistic wine merchant. So, if any poor girl ever needed help, it was she.

The yew-shaded walks were cool and refreshing that hot day. Straight into the purple sky they shot on either side of me. At their feet were white stone slabs and grassy mounds covered with immortelles. In their midst stood a broken column with the single significant word 'Liberté' engraved on the pediment, and there, just about to place an immortelle wreath on it, was M. Marin.

'Ah, Mr. Dent,' he said, 'I thought you would be here. You, too, have come out of your affection for poor Jules. You knew him?'

I told him I knew about as much of poor Jules as I did of M. l'Editeur of *La Solidarité*.

'Precisely,' he laughed. 'Ah! you are cautious. Jules did not die in his bed, Mr. Dent. "Liberté!" Ah! he has everlasting freedom now. A little over-cautious, is it not, denying your comrades and your own flesh and blood?'

'Let us understand each other, M. Marin,' I said. 'I never saw Captain Danning till this day; and if I desire to make his and his daughter's acquaintance, it is no business of yours.'

'We shall not quarrel,' he rejoined, with a shrug. 'We will say that your visit to Neufchatel was an accident. Bien! and your rapprochement here with Captain Pierce, that, too, was an accident. Let it pass. At the same time you will own that I am the oldest friend. Now, Mr. Dent, as that friend I happen to know that Miss Danning thinks it best you should *not* make her acquaintance. Just now it is not desirable. It would interfere with her plans and cause trouble. You are a gentleman, Mr. Dent, and will understand.'

With this he formally raised his hat and walked off into the cemetery, while I turned about and walked off to the hotel.

Old Paul was already there. He stuck to his pack, though, till he got my cheque in his hand. Then he turned and spelt it over half-a-dozen times before he was quite satisfied, then pocketed it and decamped without a word.

That same evening, in spite of a splitting headache, I went again to hear Carrie sing. Better had I stopped away. Her voice affected me in the same unaccountable manner. I never heard a voice like it. Her soul spoke in it. It compelled attention, and you could see by the rapt faces round you that she touched a chord in every heart.

To me, though—beautiful and entrancing as it was—there came with everything she sang a feeling of depression. Just then, however, I was really ill. My pulse was thumping—my head was raging.

There, too, sat Marin, twisting his moustache and eyeing me suspiciously. So I thought it best to steal off to bed before I made a fool of myself. I tossed about half the night, falling into a dreamful sleep towards morning, in which I was being pursued by Monsieur Marin.

He, furnished with the wings of Lucifer, was dashing after me, while I, in mortal terror, fled from him, stumbling and slipping over the dead wreaths of immortelles that curled like so many snakes about my feet.

CHAPTER V.

A VISIT FROM CARIÑA.

WHEN I woke the bright hot sun was streaming in at the window. A cold douche and a cup of coffee cleared the cobwebs off my brain, and I went into the sitting-room more resolved than ever to see Cariña.

To tell the truth, yesterday's proceedings made me feel rather small, and my worthy uncle's ivories, enamels, cameos, bronzes, and goodness knows what else, piled up there on the table, shamed me for having brought in her name with the bargaining; but there should be no more hole-and-corner work. I would go straight to her now, in spite of the mysterious Marin and my slippery uncle. By hook or by crook I would see her that day. Besides, I should be a poor sort of a fellow if I ran away now she was in trouble and had drifted into a social eddy.

Marin was on the watch, so I kept close to my room. From

my window I caught sight of him hanging about the porch, puffing his everlasting cigarette. There he stuck for over an hour, and just as I had made up my mind to put an end to this cat-and-mouse game, he came up to my room, popped his head in, and said :

‘Miss Danning will see you, Mr. Dent.’

She came in as he spoke, he closed the door behind her, and so utterly dumbfounded was I by the unexpected apparition that I could only jump up and gape like an idiot.

She was plainly, almost shabbily, dressed, walked up to me with the same look of quiet determination on her face that had struck me so much at the concert, barely touched the hand I held out to her, and began without any preamble :

‘This was the only way of seeing you, Mr. Dent ; I asked M. Marin to manage it for me, and we could fix on no other time. Don’t be mistaken,’ she went on in a louder tone as I began stammering out some commonplace civilities. ‘You may be sure I did not come here willingly. Nothing but this brought me!’ and hereupon she flashed my cheque before my eyes and threw it angrily on the table.

‘For goodness’ sake, Cariña,’ I cried, finding my tongue at this thrust ; ‘don’t begin this drybone story the very first moment we meet!’

‘Drybone story or not,’ she replied, ‘there shall be no bargaining between a Dent and a Danning. My father was wrong in asking you to his lodgings, and wrong in taking your cheque for the things you had there. There is your money though, and Paul is here to carry them back.’

‘Supposing I stick to my bargain?’ I asked, rather nettled.

‘I don’t think you’ll have the chance of further humiliating us.’

‘Upon my word, that is a most ungracious speech!’

‘What else could it be between a Dent and a Danning?’

‘Nonsense! I’m sick and tired of those names. No family squabbles for me! I never did, and never will, have anything to do with them. What is more, I want to be friends with you.’

‘And came all the way to tell me so?’

‘No. I followed our friends the Harleighs from Dresden. Lost them somewhere. Came on here. Went with Monsieur Marin to the concert, and heard you sing old Maisie’s song. Now you have the whole story.’

She thawed a little after this, not much, but got gracious enough to talk a little about the Harleighs and their life at Broxford. Told me that Lettie had sent her Maisie’s song, but that M. Marin objected to her singing it.

'Who is this Monsieur Marin?' I asked.

'Our best and truest friend,' she answered. 'My father has much to thank him for.'

'Everybody has friends, Cariña, nearer than they think.'

'And every Danning has a Dent,' she rejoined quickly.

'And some Dents may be friends,' said I.

'We have never found one.'

'You have found one to-day, Cariña.'

'You know Mrs. Dent Fraser, I think?' she asked quietly.

'Know her! I have lived with her all my life.'

'Then you must know she is our bitter enemy. You must know she set the bank against us. Turned us out of house and home, and made outcasts of us!'

'No, I don't know. I know nothing. Lately, though, I have suspected something of the sort.'

'Well, to say the least of it, it is extraordinary that you should have lived with her all your life and not known the undying hatred she has for my father.'

'I never would listen to it. I have always stood up for your father—always wanted to know him. Especially since Captain Harleigh spoke about him.'

A new light came to her eyes when I spoke of her father. Her white face softened. She involuntarily held out her hand, but snatched it back before I could take it, and said coolly:

'Thank you! If you knew my father, you would know how noble he is. This is why his enemies hate him. If he is eager for money just now, it is because he may pay the bank and get back to Broxford. This, too, is why I am singing.'

'Well, let me be your friend and his. Tell me how I can help you.'

'You may be sure we shan't take help from a Dent. No! no! it is not childish! We have learned our lesson. Why did you come here? How do we know that Mrs. Dent Fraser did not send you to carry out her programme?'

'I told you I followed the Harleighs.'

'You must have had very pressing business with them, Mr. Dent.'

For the life of me I could not tell her the truth! With her long face and sombre earnestness she was so utterly unlike what I was sure the bright breezy Lettie must be that I could not see what possible bond of sympathy there could be between them. It was disloyal to speak of Lettie to her!

'I have simply told you the truth, Cariña.'

‘Or part of it,’ she rejoined. ‘Well, as M. Marin says, we will put it down to a strange chance, and let it be. If you will call Paul, he will take those things away.’

I did not attempt to dissuade her. She had put her back up, and would have nothing whatever to do with me. I was not going on my knees to her, so gave old Paul a call and said nothing more about the cheque. He was within hail, slouched up at my call, tumbled the things into a basket at her direction, gave me a scowl, and marched off.

‘Now, Cariña,’ said I, making one last effort, ‘don’t let us part like this. Truly and frankly I want to be friends with you. The Harleighs have told me about you. What on earth am I to say to them?’

‘Nothing, not a word. You say you want to be friends? Will you promise me one thing?’

‘A dozen, if you like.’

‘Then don’t mention my name to them. Don’t mention this meeting to them—to Mrs. Dent Fraser or any one else.’

‘Nonsense! Why do you want to cut your best friends? I happen to know that the Harleighs are longing to hear about you and what you are doing.’

‘You know what I am doing. I am singing that we may get back to our home. That’s enough. I want no one to know it.’

‘And you would throw over your friends because you happen to be in trouble? That is the time to stick to them. Why don’t you snap your fingers and laugh at the world like your father? Why take life in such downright earnest?’

‘A Dent need not ask that,’ she said, coming nearer and looking as black as thunder. ‘You have persecuted us and turned us out of our home. You have followed us here and tried to traffic on my father’s weakness, and by *this*,’ she added scornfully, taking up the cheque and fluttering it in the sunlight; ‘by this you intended to strike us through your bank again. No wonder you could not promise what I asked! It would have spoiled the fine story you have to take back to Montague Place. How your Uncle Pierce tried to swindle you out of your money, and how you hounded us out of Bordeaux! Yes, you have hounded us out of Bordeaux! You have done your errand. We have orders to leave the place within three hours. You shake your head, but you dare not speak!’

Speak! I could not speak simply because I was overwhelmed by the concentrated energy of her words. I remember giving her a promise to say nothing of our meeting—all the time thinking

myself the veriest fool upon earth. Promise! Why I believe just then I should have jumped out of window on to the top of her friend Marin's head, if she had asked me. The window was wide open, and the peculiar odour of his tobacco told me he was still at his old post. Cariña droned on, lashing herself into a quiet fury without once raising the dreary monotone of her voice, till gradually her words were lost in the distant hum of the street. Every atom of sunlight too seemed to focus itself on my unfortunate cheque which she kept fluttering on the table. On this my eyes were fixed, and as I gazed the shining spot grew larger and larger till it expanded into the same quivering plane I had seen at Drufflie. Against this a group of dark yews shaped themselves—not tall and straight like those in the cemetery, but stunted and ragged. A broken column was there too, but not the same as that raised to M. Marin's friend who did not die in his bed. All was shadowy, but I remembered it distinctly. I remember, too, expecting something to happen—and something *did* happen—for just then the sudden removal of the scrap of paper broke the spell and brought me to my senses.

Goodness knows how long I had been in the clouds, it might have been an hour for all I know, but in one moment I had dropped out of them wide awake and very much alive to what was going on.

Cariña had disappeared. Three or four gendarmes were in my room. One held my cheque, another stood beside me, while a couple more were bundling my poor nicknacks into a canvas bag laid open in the middle of the floor. Leaning against the door-post, talking between the whiffs of his cigarette to a tiny long-haired man in black, was M. Marin. I took it all in at a glance. He had set the police on me, and I should presently have to give an account of myself to the Prefect. Before I could make up my mind what to do or say, the little man in black hopped across the room like a tame crow, sniffed and pecked suspiciously about me, and had actually taken my hand in his before he discovered I had my wits about me.

'Monsieur has been ill,' said he.

'Asleep,' said I.

'People do not sleep with their eyes open,' he said, sniffing about again for some evidence of chloroform.

'I'm not drugged,' I said, 'I was dazed by the sunlight. I am subject to these attacks.'

'Ah!' he cried, rubbing his hands together gleefully, 'Is that so? Passive hypnotism! I beg Monsieur to tell me about this!—my name is Lestrangle, doctor to Messieurs the Police and the

prisons. I am interested in these affections. This attack of yours now was probably brought on by some mental strain, some condition of the mind that prevented the brain acting comprehensively, some——'

But here the sleek detective cut him short. A carriage was waiting below, he said, and we would accompany him to the Prefecture. There was no help for it, I had to go, and I was only anxious to get it over in time to catch Miss Carrie before she left the town, and let her know I was not quite the weak fool I had shewn myself. I scribbled a line to the British Consul, and the next instant was driving through the glaring streets, the canvas bag by my side and Messrs. Detective and Doctor on the opposite seat.

I was charged with being in league with certain suspects—this wide appellation being centred for the time in my worthy uncle. Every detail of my hurried journey through Neufchatel to Bordeaux was known, and every single movement since I arrived had been watched. A very pretty indictment they wove out of it! The visit to the notorious Captain Pierce, and my cheque for 150*l.* payable to him, being twisted into something so terribly suspicious that I was detained there till Mr. Consul Blount came to speak in my behalf.

While I waited Lestrangle dinned his *spécialité* into me.

'So I, too, was a doctor! Well, he rejoiced to meet a professional brother who could give him practical aid in the pathology of passive hypnotism. He was writing about hypnotology. He had enlarged the field of research, and hypnotised criminals with remarkable results. It was an important aid in detecting crime, because in the hypnotic state the criminal spoke the truth, and the imbecile often showed signs of complete sanity. It was as if the diseased nerve centres were paralysed for a time and the dormant healthy ones brought into play.'

So he went on, hopping about me while he narrated some of the confessions he had extracted from the worst of criminals; then, stopping short in front of me, gravely proposed that to while away the time I should advance the cause of science and submit to be hypnotised then and there.

Altogether I had a bad time of it. The room got insufferably hot. The hours and half hours kept chiming out from Des Tours de la Grosse Cloche, and before Consul Blount appeared all chance of seeing Carina again in Bordeaux was lost. Luckily when Blount did appear, I got off. He knew the bank, and as I had no difficulty in satisfying him about my identity, the rest was easy.

I hurried off to the first music-shop. The concert troupe had gone to Bayonne, but Mlle. Diaz's name was no longer among the singers. At the Hôtel du Nantes I heard that she had left by the midday northern train, and the only mite of information I could get at the station was that M. Marin had left Bordeaux at the same time.

'Now, Mr. Dent,' said Consul Blount when he came, 'take my advice and have as little to do with these people as you can. I don't care whether they are relations or not. Drop them! They have bothered my life out. Why the police should trouble their heads about such a heaven-born idiot as Pierce Danning, I can't think. He is too utterly a fool to be turned into a suspect! He has the pluck of the devil, though, and the Anarchists make a fool of him. But for this Monsieur Marin he would have been inside four walls long ago. Marin is spoony on the singer, so you see how the cat jumps. Look out for his claws! Here's your cheque, and you'll find your cracked fallals downstairs; but I have undertaken that you shall clear out of Bordeaux without delay. So good-bye, and good luck to you!'

After this there was nothing to keep me, so I thanked him, packed my baggage, and took train for Paris that same evening. No Dannings to be heard of there, and I arrived in London with the comforting knowledge that I had made about as nice a bungle of my little trip as it was possible for any man to make.

There was a note from Captain Harleigh. They had turned back to Dresden after a few days' hunt after the Dannings, and would not now be in England till they came for good and all.

Jack's patient, my charge that was to be, was fretting and fuming at my delay. He had taken our berths, so all I could do was to pack my kit and swallow my disappointment with the best grace I could.

CHAPTER VI.

AT BROXFORD.

NEARLY a year passed before I saw England again, and it so happened that within twenty-four hours of my landing I was at Broxford.

My stalwart charge had given himself six months for our trip, but so terribly energetic was he, so determined to see every nook and corner, that at the end of nine I was nursing him through an attack of fever at the foot of the Rockies. We lost our passage and we lost our letters,

At New York a whole bunch was waiting for us, and among others a memorable one from Mrs. Dent Fraser—all about the Dent and Danning business. She had been ill—very ill—and, now that she was getting better, wanted to make her peace with the world. Maybe, like other old women, she was getting soft and foolish; but to see the old quarrel patched up was the one abiding wish of her life, and she looked to me to help her.

Of course it was money that was at the bottom of the squabble, not much money either—enough, however, to make a grand lawsuit, and the Dents won it. No sooner, too, had they the command of this money, than up went the shares and investments. The money doubled and redoubled itself, and as the pile increased so did the grudge between the two families. She was brought up on it, fed with it, dosed with it. Almost the first words she was taught were ‘Dannings are dangerous,’—better if she had never forgotten them! better if she had had nothing whatever to do with any Danning.

But before she told me her part of the story, I was to read the enclosure.

And neatly gummed at the bottom of the first page was a cutting from the death column of the *Times*.

‘*On the 13th inst., at Broxford, Hants, Cariña, the beloved wife of Pierce Danning, Esq.*’

‘Now, Henry,’ the letter went on, ‘I may have acted harshly to these people; but, before you judge me, hear how Pierce Danning behaved to me.’

‘Perhaps you know that at one time his father was a rich man, a partner in the well-known firm of Danning and Fraser, Solicitors in Bedford Row.

‘Mr. Fraser—afterwards my husband—was the business man, and great trouble he had with his fashionable partner.

‘There was a fine old establishment at Bayswater, a yacht at Cowes, a racer at Newmarket,—and before long there was a disgraceful crash of ruin.

‘Then it was discovered that the quiet Mr. Fraser had amassed a large fortune. He had cleared the Druffie estates, and still had large sums invested. The Dannings were furious. They vilified him high and low, and the Dents (who were obliged to let some of their business go through the office) defended him. It made a rare stir at the time, but ended abruptly when Mr. Fraser signified his intention of adopting young Pierce Danning and making him his heir. Not content with this, he soon showed an extraordinary desire to see the quarrel ended,

‘Why shouldn’t young Pierce marry me? ’Tis true I was the elder of the two, but what of that, if it would put an end to the quarrel? There was an old couplet:—

*When a Dent a Danning wed,
Dent and Danning feud is dead:*

so here was his chance of healing the old sore for good and all.

‘He set about it with a will. Pierce Danning had a ready tongue. Ah! remember this, Henry, when you meet him. Remember when he speaks most fairly and honestly that he is not to be trusted. I learned my lesson! I listened; we became engaged; he went off to Spain, and within three months had married his Andalusian wife.

‘Now, Henry, I ask you, was it likely that a Dent would submit tamely to this crowning insult from a Danning? I didn’t say much. I bided my time.

‘Mr. Fraser sympathised with me. He had plenty of pity, but never a word about punishing your uncle for his outrage. Pierce Danning was still to be his heir if I did not prevent it. And this was what I determined to do.

‘Pity is akin to love, they say, and I took good care not to lose Mr. Fraser’s pity. Through him I could reach Pierce Danning, so when he asked me to marry him I only agreed on the understanding that the will in Pierce Danning’s favour should be revoked.

‘Pierce lost his expected inheritance, lived abroad, and for a time my revenge was quieted. It blazed up again, though, when he came back to England. To hear that he was driving about Southampton with his wife and daughter was gall and wormwood to me. I resented his happiness, and sent Harriett Fraser down to find out what she could about him. What she found out was that he gambled, gambled deeply; that money ran through his pockets like corn through a sieve, and knowing this it was easy to strike him again through our bank.

‘You know the rest. I have been wrong. I acknowledge it. But think how I had been tried—by a Danning, too!

‘There is still time to make amends. You must help me, Henry. We won’t touch a farthing of Mr. Fraser’s money. Half shall go to his poor relations, the rest to Pierce Danning’s daughter; you won’t miss it.

‘My difficulty is that he needs help *now*, and I don’t know how to give it to him unless you manage it for me. Come back Go quietly to Broxford, and see whether he is really as ill as they

say he is. Find out what can be done for him. Harriett is no use, she would bungle it, and the Dannings must not know where the help comes from.

‘I hear that the daughter has been sent for, and if she is there, it will be your business to get intimate with her and tell me what she is like. I have been told that she is something better than a mere singer—that she is a girl of remarkable force of character.

‘I leave it all to you, but waste no time over it. My last attack has shaken me, Henry, and I don’t know how long I may be with you.’

This was news indeed, and when I remembered how grandly she had stood aloof from the world, and how severely she had judged others from her own superior standpoint, I knew what it must have cost her to make the confession. She was a rich woman, and liked to be thought richer than she was. She liked to pose as my Lady Bountiful in the stiffest of silks and satins, and to know that Harriett Fraser spoke of her with reverential awe.

But her dresses were a counterpart of herself. They hung in stiff, uncompromising pleats, but they were made of sterling stuff.

Now many and many a time in our long wearisome journeys, as I surreptitiously peeped at the tiny bunch of curved feathers that I carried about with me like an amulet, had I puzzled my brain for some pretext whereby I could go to Broxford directly I got back, and lo! here was one cut and dried for me. I had wondered if ever I should see the counterpart of those feathers. I had pictured to myself what Lettie’s home would be, but never for one moment dreamed of Carrie being there.

The Bordeaux adventure, that had faded away like an ugly dream, now cropped up again and cast a cold shadow on my rosy visions for the future.

Mighty unpleasant it would be to have Miss Carrie’s glum face there, turning the sweets into bitters and spoiling everything. I should have my work cut out, too, for she had already given me pretty good proof that she would neither take my hand nor take help. Still, if her father was in such a bad way, she might be reached through him. At all events, *I should be able to square the Bordeaux account with her.*

So by the time we reached Liverpool I had constructed a very pleasant programme for the country. There I parted from my companion, and got back to Montague Place, just about ten months after I had left it.

My aunt looked ten years older. Her grey hair had become white, her face more pinched, and her step more feeble. She asked me a few cursory questions about this and that, and made a pretence of listening with some interest while I told her of the beauties of the Yosemite Valley and the Rocky Mountains; all the time, though, her thoughts were at Broxford, and to Broxford we forthwith jumped, and soon got into full swing about the old story.

I found that the very moment she got my message from Liverpool she had arranged for my starting next day. Every single thing had been thought of. Mr. Penney, of the 'Bugle Inn,' had been told to have a dog-cart waiting at the junction, and the very page in *Bradshaw* turned down to show the trains. I was to have a *carte blanche*. Harriett Fraser was to know nothing about it; and, above all, *I was to cultivate the daughter*—to become as intimate as I could, and to send a frank opinion about her.

Next morning I was on my journey. The sporting little landlord himself was at the station with the dog-cart—not very communicative—but the fact was the visit of a stranger out of the hunting season was phenomenal enough to be suspicious. So, though he talked glibly enough of his hunters and the crops, the moment I opened my mouth about the Dannings, he whipped up the horse and chewed his straw in silence.

'Yes, the Captain and Miss Carrie were at home,' he said, as he pulled up his horse at the top of the hill; 'he wasn't well-hipped—but who could wonder at that, when he never got outside a horse, and never even so much as took a drive? Broxford was dull, but it would be deadly tame without horseflesh; the view was reckoned fine from the hill, though.'

So it was. The valley stretched away at our feet, and a lazy river crept through the greenest of green meadows to the sea. Red roofs peeped out from between the big elms, and beyond rich uplands basked in the morning sun. A perfect arabesque of wild flowers grew on either side of us, and so restful was the scene that you almost felt you were entering the Happy Valley, where you would find peace and contentment to the end of your days.

The village looked as if it had been asleep for about a hundred years; grass grew in the streets, jackdaws built in the chimneys, you went up a couple of steps to some of the shops, and down a couple to others; and such an old-world flavour was there about the place that every moment you expected a periwigged gentle-

man in square tails, or a stately dame in hoops and farthingale, to pop out and stare at you.

Mill House was easily found. Its long blank brick front with the two low-set windows would have rejoiced the heart of a bill-sticker. The tall gaunt woman who answered my ring stared in dumb astonishment at a stranger. She barred the entrance and would not let me set foot inside the door, and it was only after the most serious parley that I persuaded her to lead me across the hall on to the lawn where she said I should find Miss Carrie.

She shut and bolted the door behind me, and there I was in one of those rare old gardens which gladden our hearts by the chance commingling of flower, fruit, and vegetable.

Curiously enough the place seemed familiar to me. There was a group of ugly yews black against the blue sky. There was a dinted old sun-dial beneath them, and a broad walk down to the river. Somewhere or other I had seen this—but where? I shut my eyes to puzzle it out, when lo! the faint whiff of some distant sheep-washing caught my nose, and in a jiffy Bordeaux, with the broad quay, the cemetery, the broken column, everything, even to Monsieur Marin's cigarette, flashed back upon me.

I looked round at the house. A dismal, dilapidated, cracked old pile it was, part of the front being actually bound together and held up by the sturdy growth of an old wistaria, which wound and twisted about the windows like a huge cobra, catching here and there little heaps of fallen brick dust and mortar in its coils. Even its lilac clusters hung lugubriously, as if ashamed of the poor walls they adorned, and the poor walls themselves seemed inclined to come down with a run.

The 'tall portress' on the other side of the glass door never took her eyes off me. I stood it as long as I could, then turned and walked down to the river. The garden matched the house. Flowers grew higgledy-piggledy among the cabbages wherever they could find a hold, and half the place was a mere wilderness of weeds, where all the sparrows and chaffinches of Broxford held their Parliament.

From the river path I could hear the melancholy bleat from the sheep-washing, and straight across the meadow I recognised the hill I had just descended with Mr. Penney.

Suddenly there was a splash of oars. A fair young face shot past me, and the next moment my eyes met Cariña's, who was seated listlessly in the stern of the boat. She started, stared at me with a scared look, as I ran by the side of the boat to the landing-place, and there the hand she gave me trembled in mine.

But I had no eyes for her; no eyes for any one but Lettie; for Lettie it was who stepped out of the boat and filled the whole place with radiance. Who could have dreamed that the gawky Druffie girl would have grown into so beautiful a woman? And even now—though she has been my wife, the angel of my house for many a year—the vision of her glorious beauty as she stood before me in the sunlight, all aglow with her recent exercise, and a warm welcome flashing from her brave brown eyes, fills my heart with rapture.

So taken aback was I, that for the moment I forgot the awkwardness of the position. I forgot that I was supposed not to have met Carrie before. Her sharp look of angry surprise reminded me of it though, so I explained that I had called to ask after her father, and the servant had shown me into the garden.

‘He is better,’ she said coldly. ‘Lettie has come to see him. If you walk up to the lawn I’ll tell him you are here.’

‘Oh, Mr. Dent!’ cried Lettie, directly she had disappeared. ‘I’m so glad you have come. You must have heard what a bad plight they are in. That has brought you. We are unhappy about it. Captain Pierce has never got over his wife’s death. They had to send for Carrie. She came about six weeks ago, and seems to be getting as bad as her father. What can we do?’

‘We will talk it over.’

‘My father thinks it is all money.’

‘Whatever it is, we will put it right. We shall have a deal to talk about, Lettie.’

‘Here they are.’

As she spoke they came on to the lawn—Uncle Pierce terribly changed; indeed, in his pulled, haggard face and loose untidy clothes I could see nothing left of the spruce man I had met at Bordeaux but the bright restless eyes that fixed me directly he came near.

‘So you have found out our quiet Auburn, Mr. Dent,’ he began, in his old rattling style. ‘Very good of you. Oh, yes, I’m better. I shall be better still now you have come to cheer us. But the question is, what can we do to cheer you? Afraid we can’t ask you to the house—out of order, out of repair, rooms dismantled, plagued with rats. Curious devils, rats. Come and go like other troubles. I daresay Harleigh would put you up.’

I told him I had comfortable quarters at the ‘Bugle.’

‘Oh, you’ll be cosy enough there,’ he said. ‘Good fellow, Penney; first-rate judge of a horse; best in the county. No

hunting now, though. Fishing, but not much of that. There's the sea, though, "the blue, the fresh, the ever free," and we have a boat at the creek. Go down and see her. Go down and have a crack with old Paul.'

'You forget that the boat is not ready, father,' Carrie interposed.

'To be sure, to be sure,' he cried, collapsing. 'I did forget. No cruising yet. What's to be done, then, in this sleepy hollow? Ah! I have it. You're fond of collecting. Well, I'll give you a tip. There are some good bits to be picked up for the trouble of looking.'

'Good gracious, father!' said Carrie again, 'you don't suppose Mr. Dent has your craze?'

'The family failing, my dear, the family failing,' he replied, with a poor attempt at a wink at me. 'We must do something to amuse him now he has come this long way.'

'Depend upon it, I shall amuse myself,' said I.

'You'll find it dull,' said Carrie, coldly.

'Dull!' echoed her father, with another winking effort; 'dull! ha, ha! not a bit of it. He won't find it dull. You and your father, Lettie, must look after him. Take him up to the Crawfords and make him a member of your Posbrooke tennis club. Do something. Don't let him get the blues, for the honour of the place. Now then, come into the wilderness and gather some of my wild flowers.'

'What brings you here?' asked Carrie, when they were out of earshot. 'Is this another of your chance visits?'

'No; I came on purpose to see you.'

'To see me?'

'Yes; you are in trouble, and I want to help you.'

'You can't help us.'

'I can try. I would have tried at Bordeaux, too, if you would have let me.'

'I can only say to you what I said then. Now, too, my father is too ill for any excitement.'

'I'll come to-morrow and talk to you.'

'I can't see you. I can't leave him. He is too ill.'

'Let me help you to make him better.'

She vouchsafed no reply to this, but turned and marched off to Lettie.

'Lettie, my dear, I am going to pack you off. My father is getting tired. You must take Mr. Dent with you and come another day.'

'But I have not said half what I want to say,' cried he, with his hands full of flowers—'about Bordeaux, now.'

'Tell him another day,' she interrupted hurriedly.

'How she rules us!' he whispered to me as we walked down to the boat. 'I say, Henry, why didn't you find us out before?'

'I only got back from America the day before yesterday.'

'Aha! then you have not lost much time over it, my boy. I hope you'll hit it off with her here better than you did at Bordeaux.'

'But look here. I can really put you up to a good thing. Blue and white! Early English! villages full of it—tip-top specimens—only wants a little capital. You're the only man to manage it. Come soon and talk it over. Good-bye, Lettie—good-bye,' he added gaily, as I handed her into the boat and took the oars. 'Tell your father I shall come and see him soon. I am ever so much better!—ever so much!'

Even as he spoke his face twitched and changed. As we drifted away he looked helplessly round for Carrie, and my last glimpse showed me her strong arm supporting his scarecrow of a figure up the garden path.

I saw all this, but Lettie, seated in the stern, saw none of it. I saw it, but with her sweet face before me took precious little heed of it. We dropped down to her garden without a word, took the boat to her moorings, and walked up to the house.

What a change to the Dannings! Everything was just as clean and tidy as hands could make it. Not a speck on the yellow gravel paths, the box-edgings close shaven, the espaliers as trim as a new frigate, and the flower-pots looking for all the world as if they were kept ruddy by scrubbing. Then came a noisy welcome from Captain Harleigh and Mrs. Maxton, and, after lunch, over a cigar among the roses I had the latest about Uncle Pierce.

This was it. He and his sick wife came back to their ramshackle home soon after I saw them at Bordeaux—were no sooner back than the poor lady failed rapidly—and her somewhat sudden death at last seemed to have completely demoralised him. He threw off Dr. Joyce's attendance, discharged the solitary servant, shut himself up, and would not see a soul. Old Paul was packed off abroad for Carrie, and his wife installed at Mill House as general servant. Carrie came back post haste, but did not mend matters one bit. She followed suit. Turned her back on her old friends, would see nobody but Lettie, and moped away the days by herself.

'The long and short of it is, Master Henry, your uncle is going off his head—moreover, he drinks. He was wound up to-day, and ran down suddenly. So he goes on, like a Jack-in-the-box. He is a born idiot with money. Chucked all away that Carrie sent home to pay our tradesfolk, and now they are howling. He paid Southampton, but never a sou to Broxford. Too bad! Mrs. Danning's life was insured, but I have never heard a word about that money.

'As for the girl—Mother Carey as we used to call her—she's a failure—a dead failure! No help! Nothing! People fight shy of her. No wonder! What d'ye think my lady does? Practises her "scenas" and her songs and her roulades in the very room, if you please, where her poor mother died. Why, they tell me they can hear her on the hill of a still evening. Mill House is getting a bogey name, Harry, and she knows it. When the Crawfords called there t'other day, Becy the Dumb slammed the door in their faces. This won't do.'

'We'll alter all this, Captain Harleigh.'

'Ay, the sooner the better! Clear out the house and let a little life and health into it. It is growing on the village like a fungus. Quiet the tradespeople too—stop Mr. Chinnery's tongue. You'll have Penney with you—he's a good fellow; but mark my words, Miss Carrie will shirk you; she'll jump on her high horse the moment you talk about help. She'll talk about a remittance from abroad. She'll "Dent" you, my boy, charm you never so wisely. But there, after all's said and done, my heart warms to old Pierce. He plays ducks and drakes with money, but I'll stick to him. We'll pull together. Bring your bag here and stop till the thing is done.'

Dearly should I have liked to do this, but there were rocks ahead. Inconvenient explanations would have to be sent to Montague Place, and before I could look round the busy Harriett would be buzzing about Broxford, sipping up the gossip. No, I could not come, but I did the next best thing to it. I promised to make Willow Bank my home, and began by spending the rest of the day there. Snatched a short walk with Lettie too, among her pet flowers, recalled our Drufflie days, and went back to the 'Bugle' as madly in love as any young fellow of six and twenty ever was or ever could be.

(*To be continued.*)

At the Sign of the Ship.

IN one of his biographical sketches, of M. de Goncourt, I think, Théophile Gautier tells the world how the news of his friend's death came to him, in a country house, and with the news, the demand for the *feuilleton*. These evil tidings, these mournful demands, come thicker and more frequent as we step westward in life. One after another of a generation falls and receives his brief lament. Among them who should be more sincerely mourned than Sir Henry Maine, whose death, at Cannes, has deprived English literature of an illustrious author, and his acquaintance of a friendly presence not to be forgotten? A year ago, or less, the health of Sir Henry Maine caused him anxiety: his medical advisers gave him better hopes, but his presentiment has been fulfilled.

* * *

It is some twenty-five years since *Ancient Law* was first published, and rose, like a new light, on the world of University studies. It was, and no doubt is, a favourite book at Oxford, illuminating, in a way then quite fresh, the early history of human society. My own acquaintance with Sir Henry Maine began in 'a slight aversion.' His theories about a point of no very popular interest, the primeval conditions of marriage and of the human family, were not those of my friend Mr. J. F. M'Clennan. Probably, as a young and then impetuous reviewer, I spoke my mind pretty freely about Sir Henry Maine's notions. He wrote to me with an urbanity that would have disarmed one of the wild folk in whom we were interested, and made him fling down his stone tomahawk. Neither of us ever quite converted the other to the Polyandrous, or the Patriarchal Theory, but to me the discussion brought the great advantage of knowing a man so learned, original, courteous, and kindly. All Sir Henry Maine's books on the evolution of Society are more interesting than novels, and are written with singular lucidity and unaffected grace. He may

have been in error, now and then, among matters so obscure, for example about the wide diffusion of what the Romans called the *Patria Potestas*. Nobody can always be in the right, especially on subjects where complete knowledge may be unattainable. But Sir Henry Maine will always be remembered as an exemplar of what the scholar should be, as a man of the world too, and a politician made gravely unhappy by the spectacle of our confused unhappy age. He foresaw much that was wretched; he may have been fortunate in the opportunity of his death, like those who

*did not live to see
In Thebes the billow of calamity.*

* *

Some riots are unsympathetic to a quiet observer, but with the Rio Tinto rioters every one who values a decent life may sympathise. If it be true that the calcinations of the works ruin vegetable life for miles around, and kill trees and grass, as in the Black Country, who can marvel that the country folk resisted? The world should not let its fields, and streams, and air be blackened, blighted, poisoned by manufacturing operations. If industrialism ran long in its present course, which may or may not happen, this planet would be calcined, like the moon—a pretty result of progress. But Nature, and man's nature, will somehow, and perhaps in no very pleasant manner, prevent that consummation.

* * *

There is something in statistics that has a repulsive kind of attraction to an unregenerate heart. They do not prove anything, because everything can be proved by statistics. Thus it could be proved that ours is an age rich in poetry, which of course is absurd. In *Book Chat*, an American journal, an index is given of the poetry of November and most of December, of the magazine poetry. How many sweet strains does the reader suppose that the magazines echoed with in these six or seven weeks? What does he say to Two Hundred and Ninety separate pieces? Of the poets sixty-two, at least, are ladies, while probably many of the initials belong to the fair. Still, even so, there are about four times as many male as female poets going about, which is a larger proportion than one would expect. As to the topics which these minstrels celebrate, the quaintest is 'My Nose,' a sonnet, in the *Irish Monthly*. By the way, a large proportion of the lady poets are Irish—by their names—'who trifle

with the *cruet*, as the Irish harp is called in the national speech. Of topics Christmas comes in an easy winner; there are sixteen poems on this subject, exclusive, of course, of Christmas cards. There are but three on Love (as far as the titles show), and three—a very just proportion—on Babies. Three *ballades* are not many out of such a multitude, and two contributors to the *Ship* are 'greatly guilty' of two of them. Babies aside, there are five poems on Children. Only one on Moonlight, and *that* is cheerfully called 'Moonlight and Murder.' The others are on very miscellaneous topics. If we remember that for every accepted poet there are at least fifty unaccepted, it will become manifest that the poetical profession is rather overcrowded.

* * *

Talking of poetry, Mr. Swinburne, like the true master he is, has scored one over Mrs. Timmins. Who does not remember in Thackeray's 'A Little Dinner at Timmins's' the fair Muse's difficulty about finding a rhyme to 'babe'—that word so dear to Professor Dowden? Mrs. Timmins 'took the new pen, and a sweet sheet of paper, and began to compose a poem.' 'What shall it be about?' was naturally her first thought. 'What should be a young mother's first inspiration? Her child lay on the sofa before her, and she began in her neatest hand:

LINES

ON MY SON, BUNGAY DE BRACY GASHLEIGH TYMMYNS,
AGED TEN MONTHS.

Tuesday.

How beautiful, how beautiful thou seemest,
My boy, my precious one, my rosy babe.
Kind angels hover round thee as thou dreamest:
Soft lashes hide thy beauteous azure eye which gleamest.

But Rose could not make out whether 'gleamest' was grammar. Finally there was no rhyme to 'babe' except 'Tippoo Saib.'

* * *

Now, mark how Mr. Swinburne turns this obvious difficulty:

Love alone, with yearning
Heart for astrolabe,
Takes the star's height, burning
O'er the babe.

It is certainly rhyme, but is it reason? *Je m'en doute*. But the poet of Alice merely cuts, instead of untying, the knot when he tells us

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe,
All mimsey were the borrogoves,
And the mome raths out grabe.

For more rhymes to babe we need that legendary rhyming dictionary which the proud critic in the *Athenæum* says is used by writers of *ballades*.

* * *

It will be a pity if the old accurate sort of classical scholarship and the more modern lore of philology, archæology, and anthropology cannot live at peace together. Remember, one would say, to the warring men of letters, remember that we are all really in the same camp, and that we should befriend each other against the tyranny of Science which the popular tongue, at Oxford, calls by a shorter name. In the January number of the *Fortnightly Review* Professor Tyrrell published a clever dialogue of the dead, between Madvig, Bentley, and others. The mighty shades complain that the taste for 'conjectural emendations' in classical texts has gone out, and they quote some very happy and probable guesses at right readings. But how few have been correct out of the many that have been ventured! The science of archæological digging is spoken of with little applause. I doubt if Bentley would have talked of 'excavations.' Well, diggers, like grammarians, have blundered, and have been arrogant, but we all, diggers and critics, have the same motive—to reach a better intelligence of ancient life and ancient art. One form of this pursuit does not exclude others. Let there be peace among us and harmony.

I wonder not that the great dead resent certain attacks on good Herodotus; I, too, resent them. But when Madvig carries the war into Attica, when he charges the enemy of Herodotus with blundering over the Greek inscription from Westmoreland, he is a little unsportsmanlike. This inscription was first published in Denmark, by Professor Stephens, who thought it was Runic, and commemorated a lady called Cimokan. Professor Sayce saw that it could not be Runic and must be Greek, and he published his first attempts at deciphering it. They were not very plausible. Madvig is quite right about that. But Madvig never mentions that Professor Sayce was the first to detect the

other professor's quaint blunder of taking Greek for Runic characters—the first to see that it *was* Greek. Here is part of Mr. Sayce's sketch of a rendering of a very curious document: 'On the sixteenth of the month Idon was prematurely buried with lamentations Hermes, the son of Commagen, . . . Filibiotos, . . . a wayfarer. Farewell, thou boy from off the way, although along mortal life thou crawlest . . . ' &c.

* * *

When I was at school, and when some boy was construing rather conjecturally, the Head Master said, 'Jones, the ancients did not write nonsense!' I was a good deal struck with the truth of this at the time. When one's 'construe' makes nonsense it were better to reconsider it. Now it is not ordinary sense to say that a boy was prematurely buried with lamentations. The idea in itself is worthy of Edgar Poe. If they lamented the little chap, why did they bury him before he was dead? Did any one ever hear of a month called Idon? As to the suggestion of my friend Professor Rhys, that *Filibiotos* might be an attempt to write Macbeth in bastard Latin-Greek, was he not chaffing? Mr. Hicks luckily found out that the inscription was in hexameter verse; Mr. Henry Bradley very plausibly restored it. Mr. Arthur Evans made very good sense out of it. Macbeth, and the month Idon, and Ida, the first king of Northumbria, all disappeared, and premature burial died out of the story. Now it looks as if a boy named Hermes of Comagene had come as far as Westmoreland, to end by being 'missing' in a skirmish with the natives; well, even *that* is not so very clear. But the true lesson is, not that philology and archæology are at war, but that we should never think we have even approached a right translation from any tongue when our translation makes very dubious sense. Of course, when Celtic words are suspected in the Greek, the sense may indeed be 'sadly to seek.'

* * *

Here follows a translation which at least makes sense. It is from a Greek 'epigram' that should have settled the old dispute, Had the Greeks cats? Clearly, as this epigram proves, cats were exotic animals in Greece. The lady whom her lover laments actually threw him over because he did not, and one Nicias *did*, bring her cats from Egypt. As to the epigram, a learned friend writes: 'First edited by Boissonade from the Paris MS. of Philostratus. Jacobs, *Paralipomena* ex-11. Editis, No. 74. Not

in Cod. Vat. nor in the Anthology of Planudes. The epigram is headed, ἀδελον, οἱ δὲ Ἀγαθίου (Of uncertain authorship, assigned by some to Agathias). I suspect it was attributed to Agathias by some who remembered *Anth. Pal.* vii. 204, which is about a partridge of Agathias's, killed by a cat. The style reminds one more of Marcus Argentarius. And it certainly belongs to the Justinian group of poets.' Here follows the English; the Greek (two versions exist—it may have been a competition in a literary set) may be sought in the proper place.

ARSINOË'S CATS.

Arsinoë the fair, the amber-tressed,
Is mine no more;
Cold as the unsunned snows are is her breast,
And closed her door.
No more her ivory feet and tresses braided,
Make glad mine eyes,
Snapt are my viol-strings, my flowers are faded—
My love-lamp dies.

Yet, once, for dewy myrtle-buds and roses,
All summer long,
We searched the twilight-haunted garden closes
With jest and song.
Aye, all is over now—my heart hath changed
Its heaven for hell;
And that ill chance which all our love estranged,
In this wise fell.

A little lion, small and dainty sweet
(For such there be!)
With sea-grey eyes and softly-stepping feet,
She prayed of me.
For this, through lands Egyptian far away,
She bade me pass;
But in an evil hour, I said her nay—
And now, alas!
Far-travelled Nicias hath wooed and won
Arsinoë
With gifts of furry creatures white and dun
From over-sea.

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.

Scholars, if they deign to look at this page, will judge for themselves, but I confess I see no warrant for 'the *unsummed* snows' in

στῆθος ἐμοὶ παρέχει ψυχρότερον χιόνος.

Nor has the Greek any exact equivalent for 'twilight-haunted'; but translators may be permitted these elegant liberties. To avoid them Mr. James Darmesteter has recently rendered Miss Mary Robinson's poem into French prose, very beautifully and accurately; and a lady (Madame Couve) has done as much, though scarce so happily, for Rossetti's sonnets.

* * *

People who know the Red Lion at Farningham, on the Darent, know one of the most beautiful and characteristic pieces of English scenery. Hills and village and church and bridge, and the clear Darent slipping past the lawn, and roses on the hedges, and hay in the fields, and from behind the elms the click of bat and ball—what better has this life to give? But the *trout* of the Darent know a little too much for a mere Border angler. Any one who is fond of the place and of fishing will rise (as the trout don't) at 'Trout Fishing on the River Darent: a Rural Poem. By C. Wayth, Esq. (London: John Mortimer, 1845),' when he sees it in a catalogue. But the book is a snare. There is little fishing in it. Dickens said, when a friend sent him a poem, called 'Orient pearls at random strung'—'too much *string*, my boy.' And there is too much 'rural poem,' and too little trout-fishing, in the work of C. Wayth, Esq. Here is his periphrasis for our friendly *Red Lion*:

These scenes I quit to seek the dwelling where
Each want is soothed and lulled is every care;
The mansion where the Lord of Afric's plains
In fearful aspect stands, yet mildly reigns.

A cipher refers one to the appendix:

NOTE 11. PAGE 37.

'The Lord of Afric's plains,' &c.

The Red Lion Inn.

Mr. Wayth must have had a good heart, in the right place,

but he drew his fly up stream, 'to make it seem alive'—bad policy. But even then and there he met the victims of agricultural depression, and the rural unemployed :

In distant fields for labour thus he tried,
But yet the wished-for boon was still denied.

Ah, where is *ce pays fabuleux où l'ouvrier trouve de l'ouvrage*, as M. Guy de Maupassant says in *Le Vagabond*?

* * *

Who shall discover the secret of the gift of Art? The Christy Fund has bought, and bestowed on the British Museum, some relics from the Bone Caves in France. Here are sketches etched on bone and ivory by men who were contemporary with the Mammoths, men who lived before the Glacial period. How long ago is that? Probably it must be computed in hundreds of thousands of years. But the sketches have the freedom of a Landseer, and are jotted down, here and there on the stones, as Raphael jotted down hasty studies. They are as far removed from other savage art as is the art of Leech. The very implements of this astonishing pre-glacial people have a Greek refinement and delicacy of curve and tapering outline. Did they migrate south, before the advancing ice, and become the ancestors of the Greeks?

* * *

Isis and Osiris appear to have a fancy for the author of *Allan Quatermain*. An ancient Egyptian ring in lapis lazuli has come into his possession, which reads *Agr*, or *ân-agr*, 'The clever writer, or Great Scribe.' This looks like 'a prediction, cruel smart.' Apparently *Agr* offered the ring to *An*, but who was *An*, a lady or a god? By the way, Herodotus mentions Phanes, who deserted the Greek *condottieri* and went over to Cambyses. The Museum has now the rim of a pot dedicated by a Milesian of this name to Apollo, a great Milesian deity. So archæology confirms history.

* * *

A correspondent has requested and received permission to use the story of the Brownies and the two ladies, told in the last *Ship*. Novelists at a distance will please accept this intimation.

ANDREW LANG.

The 'Donna.'

THE EDITOR begs to acknowledge the receipt of the following contributions. Amounts received after February 11 will be acknowledged in the April number.

M. H. Donne 1*l.* A. Donne 1*l.* H. H. H. 7*s.* 6*d.* M. A. Streatfield 10*s.* E. O. 2*s.* W. Wood 10*s.* (Donna), 10*s.* (Workroom). A. P. 2*s.* 6*d.* R. S. C. 2*l.* Mrs. Richards 10*s.* Mrs. Brodribb 10*s.* S. J. P. 5*s.* Mrs. Twamley 5*s.* The Misses Creed 3*s.* E. F. S. 2*l.* H. Marnham 1*l.* (Donna), 1*l.* (Workroom). Beatrice 2*s.* Frau Buchholz 2*s.* 6*d.* H. B. B. C. 1*l.* W. 10*s.* Phyllis 20*s.* E. N. H. 5*s.* C. D. 5*s.* E. C. P. 3*s.* Mrs. Boffin 5*s.* Mrs. Rivers 5*s.* Hudson's Bay 10*s.* Trent 2*s.* E. O. (Workroom) 5*s.*, (Donna) 5*s.* 'A Northern' 3*s.* Anonymous 5*l.* Col. Grylls 1*l.* L. G. de C. 1*l.* Didsbury 2*s.* J. B. S. Somers 2*l.* 2*s.* A. D. T. 5*s.* John Silverston 2*s.* 6*d.* Pineside, Bournemouth, 2*s.* 6*d.* J. M. S. B. 3*s.* Quidam (Donna) 10*s.*, (Workroom) 10*s.* Mrs. W. Shipp 5*s.* M. C. P. H. 2*s.* 6*d.* E. W. 5*s.* M. A. S. (Workroom) 1*l.*, (Donna) 10*s.* W. J. D. 10*l.* Anonymous 5*s.* G. H. Longman 2*l.* 2*s.* W. D. H. 2*s.* 6*d.* S. A. A. (Donna) 5*l.*, (Workroom) 5*l.* Mr. Carusen 1*l.* A. M. M. 10*s.* J. B. Grylls and H. B. Grylls 5*s.* Parish of Gillingham, Dorset, per C. and G. Bridges 2*l.* Quartermaster-General's Office, per C. C. 10*s.* 6*d.* Miss Raby, 5*s.* A Soldier 10*s.* Anonymous 10*s.* E. 10*s.* H. E. Luxmoore 1*l.* C. M. W. 1*l.* U. U. B. 10*s.* E. Wyndham 1*l.* Marple Bridge Boys 1*s.* 11½*d.* C. A. R. 12*s.* 6*d.* A. G. 1*l.* A. M. A. M. 5*s.* Anonymous (Fowey) 5*s.* Anonymous (Chipping Sodbury) 1*l.* Collected by H. L. 5*s.* G. W. O. 2*l.* 2*s.* H. Hutchinson 5*l.* H. A. C. 2*s.* 6*d.* F. L. Slous 1*l.* 1*s.* M. E. G. 2*s.* 3*d.* George Ferguson 1*l.* Edith 25*s.* Miss Frere 1*l.* C. Croft 1*s.* Miss H. B. Johnson (Workroom) 1*l.* A. R. 5*s.* C. H. G. B. 10*s.* Miss Walker 2*l.* Teragram 10*s.* A. M. C. 1*l.* A few friends in G. P. O., per A. C. B. 3*l.* 4*s.* E. M. W. 5*s.* H. M. E. 10*s.* W. R. Walsh 5*s.* M. J. H. 5*s.* M. E. (Donna) 12*s.*, (Workroom) 10*s.* Señora Donna 3*s.* J. J. 1*l.* Gringoire (Donna) 2*s.* 6*d.*, (Workroom) 2*s.* 6*d.* A. P. C. 10*s.* W. Willis 2*s.* M. Y. V. (Donna) 10*s.*, (Workroom) 10*s.* F. H. W. 1*l.* A. E. W. 2*s.* 6*d.* Noble Taylor 1*l.* Mrs. Taylor 4*s.* 6*d.* Miss Taylor 2*s.* 6*d.* Norman Taylor 1*s.* 3*d.* Alice Hudson 1*s.* Rebecca Gooden 1*s.* Annie 3*d.* Thomas Green 1*s.* 6*d.* Francis Ford 1*s.* B. 10*l.* L. S. 10*s.* E. C. T. 5*s.* J. Rix 10*s.* M. F. E. 1*l.* Mrs. Cleasby 2*l.* M. J. G. M. 7*s.* 6*d.* Mrs. C. C. Curtis 10*s.* G. C. G. 1*l.* H. 10*s.* J. and E. S. 2*s.* 6*d.* P. C. (Workroom) 5*s.* F. Smith 15*s.* Lovell Heath 4*s.* J. N. S. 5*s.* E. C. M. 2*s.* 6*d.* A. H. B. 10*s.* Bridget 1*s.* F. E. K. 1*l.* Mrs. Wilson 10*s.* M. and S. P. 5*s.* A. M. L. 10*s.* W. Hume 5*s.* Rev. H. P. Jeston 1*l.* 1*s.* J. G. Welchman 1*l.* Mrs. Ellis 1*l.* J. A. P. 10*s.* Admiral Parish 10*s.* Mrs. Parish (Workroom) 10*s.* J. F. Bradbury 2*l.* A. Curtis 2*s.* 6*d.* Miss Harvey 4*s.* B. E. 10*s.* T. Norton Longman 2*l.* E. S. B. 5*s.* M. B. 2*s.* 6*d.* A Hard-up Sympathiser 1*s.* 6*d.* Jumbo and Alice 15*s.* A Little Boy (V. W. T.) 2*s.* Mr. Norris 25*s.* (Donna), 10*s.* (Sisters' Workroom). D. B. 10*s.* Mrs. Clarke-Jervoise 20*s.* H. J. Marshall (per K. A. M.) 1*l.* Mrs. Crundevell 1*l.* (Donna), 1*l.* (Workroom). Bee (Guernsey) 10*s.* M. A. C. 5*s.* B. R. A. 1*s.* S. W. 5*l.* F. P. and F. H. 2*l.* T. R. T. 10*s.* E. S. B. and A. E. B. (Cardiff) 10*s.* M. de R. (per Coutts & Co.) 5*l.* M. Smith Casson 1*l.* Miss Geldart 5*s.* Charles B. Stableforch 1*l.* Miss Ella L. Cunliffe 5*s.* General Sir E. and Lady Haythorn 2*l.* B. 2*s.* Anon. (Chester) 2*l.* 2*s.* Anti-Scandal Society 2*s.* 6*d.* Three bundles of old clothes—all sent anonymously.

The Editor begs to say, in answer to Mr. Hutchinson and one or two other friends, that he is unable to assist in the distribution of free dinners. The

Sisters have in some few desperate cases given a starving man a dinner, and have discretion in cases of urgent necessity. But it is most desirable that this discretion should be used only in cases that are absolutely urgent. Any relaxation in this respect would at once attract crowds of beggars, whereas it is the object of the Donna to assist those who are out of work, but who are actually waiting to be hired. The Editor begs to inform A Little Boy (V. W. T.) that any parcels of old clothes should be sent to the Sister in Charge, St. Katherine's Restaurant, 42A Dock Street, E.

The following sums have been sent by readers of the Magazine direct to the Sisters, who desire the Editor to acknowledge them:—

A. M. Lockyer (Workroom) 5s. B. L. Viney (Workroom) 2s. 6d. E. A. W. (Donna) 5s., (Workroom) 5s. Anonyms (Donna) 2s. Mrs. Gore (Workroom) 1l. Miss Edington (Workroom) 5s. Mrs. Wylly's Four Boys (Workroom) 3s. Thomas Gripper (Workroom) 5s. G. R. (Donna) 5s. Louisa Gem (Donna) 10l. Mrs. Birch (Donna) 5s. A Lady (Workroom) 1l., (Donna) 1l. M. Greville (Workroom) 1l. 1s. Anon. (Workroom) 9d. Miss Helen Johnson (Donna) 10s. Collected by Miss Otley (Donna) 10s. and a box of old clothes. E. C. (Donna) 2s. Mrs. Wybrow (Workroom) 5s. and some old clothes. Mrs. Dredge a parcel of old clothes.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Editor requests that his correspondents will be good enough to write to him informing him of the subject of any article they wish to offer, before sending the MS. A stamped and addressed envelope should accompany the MS. if the writer wishes it to be returned in case of non-acceptance. The Editor can in no case hold himself responsible for accidental loss. All communications should be addressed to

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CHLORODYNE.—Vice Chancellor Sir W. PAGE WOOD stated publicly in Court that Dr. J. COLLIS BROWNE was UNDOUBTEDLY the INVENTOR of CHLORODYNE, that the whole story of the defendant Freeman was deliberately untrue, and he regretted to say it had been sworn to.—See Times, July 18th, 1884.

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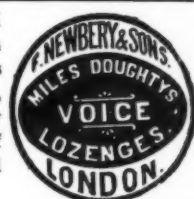
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